

ESSAY ACTIVATOR

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The Essay Activator has been created to help you improve your written English. By varying the range of vocabulary and expressions that you use, your essays will become richer and your grades will improve.

You can see from the menu on the left-hand side of your screen that there are 28 Essay Activators. Each of these contains all the important words and phrases that can be used to perform a particular function in your essay, for example showing that you agree with an idea (Agreeing); explaining how something has increased (Increasing) or saying what other people think (Quoting People). The language covered by the Essay Activator is not related to any particular subject area. For subject-related vocabulary you should look at the Topic Activator.

Each Essay Activator is divided into sections. Look, for example, at the Essay Activator on Giving Examples. This is divided into 3 sections: what you say when giving an example; what you say when there are a lot of other examples of something; to give someone or something as an example. If you want to give some examples in your essay, look at Section 1 and you will find a variety of words and phrases to avoid repeating for example every time: for instance, be a case in point, by way of illustration etc. If there are a lot of examples you could mention, look at Section 2 for ways of dealing with this: such as, including, to name but a few etc.

Each word or phrase is followed by an explanation of the meaning and/or use and is illustrated with example sentences. These examples can be used as models for you to produce your own natural-sounding sentences.

In each of the Essay Activators you will also find Study Notes about grammar and formality. For example, in Section 2 of Giving Examples there is a Study Note at such as to explain that there is not usually a comma before this phrase, whereas there is usually one before for example and including.

I. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

1. ADVANTAGES

advantage noun [countable] a good feature that something has, which makes it better, more useful etc than other things:

- The great advantage of digital cameras is that there is no film to process.
- The advantage of using a specialist firm is that the people who work there have years of experience.
- One of the big advantages of this type of engine is that it is smaller and lighter than a conventional petrol engine.
- The university has the advantage of being one of the oldest and best respected in the country.
- The movement of the sea is predictable. This gives wave power a distinct advantage over (=an obvious advantage compared to) wind power.
- Despite a few problems with the design, the car's advantages clearly outweigh its disadvantages. (=the problems are not enough to stop it being a good car)

benefit noun [countable] a feature of something that has a good effect on people's lives:

- Regular exercise has many benefits, including reducing the risk of heart disease.
- Modern technology has brought great benefits to mankind.
- There has been a great deal of research into the potential benefits of using genetically modified crops.

merit noun [countable] a good feature that something has, which you consider when you are deciding whether it is the best choice:

- The committee will consider the merits of the proposals.
- In her book, she discusses the relative merits of the two political systems. (=she compares the features that they have)
- The merits and demerits of (=the good and bad features of) alternative funding systems were widely discussed in the newspapers.
- The chairman saw no great merit in this suggestion. (=he did not think that it was a good idea)

good point noun [countable] a good feature that something has:

- One of the good points about the car is that it is easy to drive.
- Each system has its good and bad points.

plus point noun [countable] a good feature that something has:

- The small but powerful battery is another of the camera's many plus points.
- The estate agent's leaflet said a major plus point was the recently modernized kitchen.

the good/great/best thing about used when mentioning a good feature of something:

- The great thing about living in a city is that you can go shopping at almost any hour of the day or night.
- Her wicked sense of humour was the best thing about her.
- The good thing about cycling is that you don't have to worry about getting stuck in a traffic jam.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

the good/great/best thing about is rather informal. Don't use it in formal essays.

the beauty of something is that used when you want to emphasize that something has a very good or useful feature:

- The beauty of the design is that it is so simple.

2. DISADVANTAGES

disadvantage noun [countable] a bad feature that something has, which makes it less good, less useful etc than other things:

- The main disadvantage of this book is its price.
- These vaccines have two serious disadvantages. Firstly, they are not 100% effective, and secondly, they are expensive to make.
- A major disadvantage of using large quantities of chemicals is that they quickly get absorbed into soil.

drawback noun [countable] a disadvantage which makes you think that something is not so good, even though it has other advantages:

- The major drawback of this method is that it can be very time-consuming.
- Aluminium is very light and also very strong. Its main drawback is that it cools down very rapidly.
- Summer in the Scottish islands can be beautiful. The only drawback is the weather, which can be very changeable.

downside noun [singular] the disadvantage of a situation that in most other ways seems good or enjoyable:

- The downside of running your own business is that you are responsible if anything goes wrong.
- Everyone wants to be rich and famous, but it does have its downside.
- Most comfort eaters enjoy what they eat, but the downside is that they soon start to put on weight.

bad point noun [countable] a bad feature that something has:

- There are good points and bad points about single sex schools.
- For all its bad points, and there are many, it is still the best software system of its kind available.

II. AGREEING

1. AGREEING WITH SOMEONE OR SOMETHING

agree verb [intransitive and transitive] to have the same opinion as someone, or to think that a statement is correct:

- Many people agreed with his views about the war.
- I completely agree with Chomsky when he says that humans are born with a special ability to learn language.
- Most experts agree that dieting needs to be accompanied by regular exercise.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Don't say 'agree someone's opinion' or 'agree to someone's opinion'. Say agree with someone's opinion.

share somebody's view/concern/fear etc to have the same opinion, concern, fear etc as someone else:

- I share her concerns about the lack of women in high academic positions.
- A lot of people share his view that tourism will have a negative impact on the island.
- This fear was shared by union leaders, who saw the new law as an attack on their rights.

subscribe to a view/theory etc to agree with an opinion or idea:

- There are a number of scientists who subscribe to the view that there is a God who controls the workings of the universe.
- Some people think that there are cases where torture is justified. I, for one, do not subscribe to this theory.

be of the same opinion if people are of the same opinion, they agree with each other:

- All three specialists were of the same opinion about the cause of her illness.
- Professor Dawkins is of the same opinion as Dr Jones.

concur verb [intransitive and transitive] a formal word meaning to agree:

- The committee concurred with this view.
- Most modern historians would readily concur that (=agree without any hesitation) this was an event of huge importance.
- As most biblical scholars concur, the letter could not have been written by any contemporary of Jesus.

somebody is right/somebody makes a valid point used when you agree with what someone says:

- Darwin was right when he argued that humans and higher mammals are closely related.
- Cox makes a valid point when he questions our ability to remain objective.

2. PARTLY AGREEING WITH SOMEONE OR SOMETHING

agree up to a point to partly agree with someone or something:

- Although I agree with him up to a point, I find it hard to believe that this is true in every case.

broadly agree to agree with most parts of something:

- The conference delegates broadly agreed with the proposals.

there is some truth in used when saying that you think that something is partly true or right:

- There is some truth in the argument that there is a link between violence on our streets and violence on our TV screens.
- There is some truth in all of these theories, but none of them can fully explain the causes of unemployment.

3. A GROUP OF PEOPLE AGREEING

agreement noun [uncountable] if there is agreement on something, people agree about it:

- Today there is general agreement that pollution from cars and planes is threatening the future of our planet.
- There is widespread agreement on the need for prison reform. (=most people agree about it)
- Geologists are mostly in agreement about how the islands were formed. (=most of them agree about it)
- The two sides were unable to reach agreement. (=they could not agree with each other)

consensus noun [singular,uncountable] agreement between most of the people in a group about something, especially with the result that they decide on a particular course of action:

- There is now a general consensus among scientists on the causes of global warming.
- There was a growing consensus that the military government had to be replaced.

common ground noun [singular, uncountable] things that people agree about, especially when there are other things that they disagree about:

- There are many areas of common ground between the two philosophers.
- Despite their differing backgrounds, they found common ground in their interest in science.

unanimous adjective if a group of people are unanimous on something, they all have the same opinion about it:

- Medical experts are unanimous on this issue.
- They were unanimous in their opposition to the plan.
- a unanimous decision by the three judges

widely held view/belief etc an opinion, belief etc that many people have:

- There is a widely held view among business experts that selling off a business to a management team is not in the best interests of the company's shareholders.
- There is a widely held belief that advanced western societies are becoming more and more criminalized.

widely/generally accepted if something is widely or generally accepted, it is thought to be true by most people:

- It is now widely accepted that the universe began with the so-called 'big bang'.
- It is generally accepted that electricity generated from nuclear power is more expensive than other forms of electricity.

III. EXPRESSING AIM OR PURPOSE

aim to do something to try to achieve something:

- This paper aims to show how science and technology have influenced the work of artists.
- The research aims to answer two questions. First, what causes the disease? Second, is it possible to find a cure?
- In this study, we aimed to record the number of birds who returned to the same woodland for a second summer.

set out to do something to try to achieve something. You use set out to do something especially when talking about someone's original aims when they start to do something:

- The organization never achieved what it set out to do.
- The first chapter sets out to explain the origins of modern science.
- The authors set out to show how men's and women's language are different from each other.

in order to so that someone can do something, or so that something can happen:

- Tests were carried out in order to find out if the drug had any side effects.

be intended to do something if something is intended to do something, it is done for that purpose:

- The course is intended to provide a basic introduction to molecular biology.
- The dams were intended to control the flooding which affects the river in winter.

be supposed to do something/be meant to do something to be intended to have a particular result or effect. You use these phrases especially when something actually fails to achieve what was originally planned:

- The film is supposed to be a serious drama.
- The scheme was meant to improve the city's image.

SYNONYMS:

aim noun [countable] what you want to achieve when you do something:

- The main aims of the project are as follows.
- The main aim of the study is to investigate the way in which young people deal with the stress of exams.
- The bank achieved its aim of attracting 50,000 customers by the end of the year.
- One of the aims of this chapter is to explain Freud's theory of the mind.
- My aim in this article is to examine ways in which the present system could be improved.
- A cure for cancer is our ultimate aim. (=the most important aim, which you hope one day to achieve)

purpose noun [countable] the reason why you do something, and the thing that you want to achieve when you do it:

- He did not tell them about the purpose of his visit.
- The main purpose of education is to help people to lead satisfying and productive lives.
- The main purpose of the changes is to reduce costs and improve the service to customers.
- The United Nations was established for the purpose of protecting basic human rights.
- The information will be used for research purposes.
- Many plants from the rainforest are used for medical purposes.

objective noun [countable] the thing that someone is trying to achieve, especially in business or politics:

- The policy has three main objectives: firstly, to increase food production; secondly, to improve the distribution of food; and finally, to improve the diet of ordinary people.
- The principal objective of any company is to make money for its shareholders.
- The government is unlikely to achieve its long-term objective of cutting CO₂ emissions.

goal noun [countable] something that a person or organization hopes to achieve in the future, even though this may take a long time:

- It took Mandela over forty years to achieve his goal of a democratic South Africa.
- The company's long-term goal is to be the market leader in this type of technology.
- World leaders have set themselves the goal of getting rid of child poverty.

target noun [countable] the exact result, often a number or an amount of something, that a person or organization intends to achieve:

- The University is expected to reach its target of 5000 students next September. (=achieve its target)
- They failed to meet their target of having a computer in every classroom.
- He set himself the target of raising over \$1 million for cancer research.

intention noun [uncountable and countable] something that you intend to do:

- Their intention was to sail on February 10th, but bad weather made this impossible.
- She went to Hollywood with the intention of starting a career in movies. (=that was the reason she went there)
- Rafsanjani said that Iran had no intention of developing nuclear weapons. (=they definitely did not intend to do this)
- The reader can never be 100% sure of the writer's original intentions.
- It was never their intention to encourage people to break the law.
- It is not my intention here to give a detailed account of all the events that led up to the war.

mission noun [countable] something that a person or organization hopes to achieve, which they consider to be very important and forms the basis of their activities:

- The agency's mission is to provide medical and psychological help to victims of the war.
- Our mission is to educate people about the disease.
- The students are on a mission to record and preserve the history of their area. (=they are trying hard to do something, because they feel it is very important)

the point noun [singular] the purpose of doing something and the reason why it is right or necessary:

- The point of the experiment is to show how different metals react with oxygen.
- People sometimes find it difficult to see the point of studying subjects such as Latin at school. (=they find it difficult to understand why it is necessary)
- He felt that his critics were completely missing the point. (=they failed to understand the most important purpose or reason for something)

ends noun [plural] the result that someone is trying to achieve, when this is bad or dishonest:

- Several politicians were accused of trying to exploit the situation for their own ends. (=use it in order to get advantages for themselves)
- The terrorists will do almost anything to achieve their ends.

IV. APPROXIMATE/EXACT

1. WORDS MEANING APPROXIMATELY

approximately adverb used when saying that a number or amount is not exact, and it may be a little more or a little less:

- Approximately 30% of adults who have the disease will die from it.
- The last earthquake of this size occurred approximately 60 years ago.
- In 1994, the U.S. Government paid farmers approximately \$10 billion in grants.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Approximately is more formal than about, and is usually used in more technical contexts.

about adverb used when saying that a number or amount is not exact, and it may be a little more or a little less:

- They arrived at about 10 o'clock in the evening.
- It takes about 2 hours from London to Leeds on the train.
- There were about 50 people at the meeting.

roughly adverb approximately - used especially when you are trying to give someone a general idea of the size, number, or amount of something:

- The two countries are roughly the same size.
- Roughly half of all Italy's gas is imported.
- The amount of caffeine in one can of cola is roughly equivalent to four cups of coffee. (=it contains about the same amount)

(somewhere/something) in the region of approximately. Used with very large numbers or amounts:

- A new stadium would cost somewhere in the region of \$100 million.
- The painting is worth something in the region of £15,000.

circa preposition used before a year, usually one that is long time ago, to say that something happened near that time, but perhaps not exactly in that year:

- The house dates from circa 1600.
- The picture shows a building under construction, circa 1848.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Circa is originally a Latin word, meaning 'about'.

The written abbreviation of circa is c or c., and this is often used instead of the full form: He was born c 1830.

- Heston, who died c. 1357, was a noted academic.

or more

10 years/20%/100 kilos etc or more used when the total may be a lot more, and you want to emphasize that this is a large amount:

- It can take 6 months or more to get a visa.
- Olson weighed 250 pounds or more.

2. WORDS MEANING EXACTLY

exactly adverb no more and no less than a particular number, amount, or time:

- They finished at exactly 6pm.
- Every patient received exactly the same amount of the drug.
- Exactly 60 years ago, two scientists at the University of Birmingham demonstrated the first device that used microwaves.

to be exact used when you are giving a more exact figure or amount. To be exact is used at the end of the sentence:

- The rocks there are very old: more than 3 billion years old, to be exact.

precisely adverb a word meaning exactly, used when you want to emphasize what you are saying:

- The meeting began on time, at precisely eight o'clock.
- He always left his office at 2 o'clock precisely.
- No one knows precisely how many people were killed or injured.

right adverb

right in the middle of/next to/in front of etc used when you are emphasizing that something is in a particular position:

- The arrow was right in the middle of the target.
- The two explosions happened right next to each other.

directly adverb

directly in front of/behind/under etc exactly in a particular position:

- It was a small house, directly behind the church.
- You need to sit directly in front of the screen.
- A statue stood directly below the stained-glass window.

V. CAUSES

1. TO CAUSE STH TO HAPPEN

make verb [transitive] to make something happen, or make someone do something:

- Plants need light and heat to make them grow.
- He was good at making people laugh.
- The government's economic policies made it unpopular with voters.
- Inventions such as the washing machine have made people's lives a lot easier.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Don't say 'make somebody/something to do something'. For example don't say 'What makes young people to commit crime?' Say: What makes young people commit crime?

cause verb [transitive] to make something happen, or make someone do something:

- Smoking causes cancer.
- The lack of rain is causing problems for farmers.
- The crisis caused oil prices to go up dramatically.
- At first, the news caused people to panic.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Cause is often used about bad things, for example: High fat diets can cause heart disease.

Cause is also often used in scientific and technical descriptions, when saying that something has a particular effect, for example: The heat causes the ink and powder to mix together, and an image is formed.

Cause is more formal than make

lead to verb [intransitive] to start a process that later makes something happen:

- The research could eventually lead to a cure for many serious illnesses.
- Over-fishing has led to a collapse in the numbers of tuna and cod in the Atlantic.
- Cutting spending budgets will inevitably lead to poorer quality public services.

result in phrasal verb to make something happen, especially something bad:

- Many household fires result in death or serious injury.
- Low levels of vitamin D can result in a softening of the bones.
- The trial resulted in Oscar Wilde being sent to prison for 2 years.

create verb [transitive] to make a condition, situation, problem, or feeling start to exist:

- In the novel, McEwan creates an atmosphere of menace.
- Science and technology often create more problems than they solve.
- The coach's job is to create the conditions for success.

bring about phrasal verb to make something happen, especially a change or an improved situation:

- The war brought about enormous social change.
- So far, all attempts to bring about peace have failed.

give rise to a formal phrase, used when an event, action etc makes a feeling or problem start to exist:

- Poor performance in exams can give rise to depression and even thoughts of suicide.
- The announcement gave rise to violent protest in the east of the country.
- Drinking unfiltered water can give rise to health problems.

generate verb [transitive] to make a feeling start to exist and grow among a large group of people, for example interest, support, or a demand for something:

- The trial generated a lot of interest in the media.
- Japan's economic success generated a huge demand for luxury goods.

be responsible for to be the person or thing that makes something happen:

- The human rights panel concluded that the military was responsible for killings, torture and other abuses.
- These particles are responsible for making new protein molecules.

set off phrasal verb to cause something to suddenly happen, especially fighting, protests, or debates involving a lot of people:

- The killing of Martin Luther King set off a wave of rioting across the USA.
- The programme set off a national debate about children's school meals.

trigger verb [transitive] to make something suddenly start to happen, especially a bad situation such as a crisis or a war, or a medical condition:

- The First World War was triggered by a series of events, beginning with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo.
- Certain foods can trigger allergies.
- If oil prices keep rising, this could trigger an economic crisis.

2. SOMETHING IS CAUSED BY ANOTHER THING

be caused by:

- Many illnesses are caused by stress.
- Almost half of all accidents are caused by speeding. (=driving too fast)

be the result of/result from to happen because of something else that happened or was done:

- He said the success of his company was the result of hard work by all the staff.
- Greenhouse gases are the direct result of pollution from cars and factories.
- Meningitis results from an inflammation around the brain.
- These conditions result from a combination of economic and social factors.

arise from verb [intransitive] if a problem or a serious situation arises from something, it starts to happen because of it:

- A number of problems arose from the break-up of the former Soviet Union.
- People are now much more aware of the dangers arising from asbestos dust.

stem from phrasal verb if something stems from another thing, it develops from it and there is a direct link with it, even though this link is not always immediately obvious:

- His emotional problems stemmed from an unhappy childhood.
- The present difficulties stem from the recession and the collapse of the housing market.

3. TO BE ONE OF THE THINGS THAT CAUSE STH TO HAPPEN

play a part if something plays a part, it is one of several things that causes something to happen:

- No one knows exactly what causes the disease. Genetic factors are thought to play a part.
- The rioting in the capital played a major part in the collapse of the government.

be a factor to be one of several things that affect something:

- Public pressure against nuclear power was definitely a factor in their decision.
- The parent's influence is a major factor in a child's progress at school. (=a very important factor)

contribute to verb [intransitive] if something contributes to a situation, it is one of the things that cause that situation to happen or become worse, but it is not one of the main causes:

- Methane gas is known to contribute to the greenhouse effect.
- Television often gets blamed for contributing to the decline of family life.
- Passive smoking could contribute to the development of respiratory diseases among nonsmokers.
- It is acknowledged that unhappiness is a contributing factor in the development of certain illnesses.

influence verb [transitive] if something influences another thing, it has an effect on it, although it does not cause it directly:

- Weber demonstrated that culture and religion influenced economic development.
- Genetic factors may influence how the central nervous system reacts to nicotine.

4. SOMETHING THAT CAUSES ANOTHER THING TO HAPPEN

cause noun [countable]:

- Scientists are still trying to find the cause of the disease.
- Investigators have visited the scene to establish the cause of the accident. (=find out what the cause is)
- Polluted water is one of the major causes of death among young children in some countries.
- Almost certainly, the underlying cause of the war was the need for oil. (=the most important cause, even though it is not immediately obvious)
- Scarman was in no doubt that the root cause of the rioting was unemployment and poor living conditions. (=the most important cause, even though it is not immediately obvious)

factor noun [countable] one of several causes of a situation or condition:

- The research tried to identify the key factors (=most important factors) affecting economic change.
- The committee studied a wide range of social, economic, and environmental factors.
- Studies have shown that alcohol is a contributory factor in 10% of all accidents in Britain (=it is one of the things that causes accidents, often in combination with other things)
- Cost is often the deciding factor when choosing any product. (=the main factor that makes you choose to do something)

origins noun [plural] the first causes from which a situation, condition etc has developed:

- The book describes the origins of modern science.
- The origins of Sudan's debt crisis go back to the early 1970s.
- For some patients, understanding the origins of their fears is a long and painful process.
- The dispute between the two families had its origins in the battle of Wakefield.

source noun [countable] something that causes something else to develop, for example a disagreement, a feeling, or an infection:

- Housework can become a major source of conflict between couples.
- The fact that the two words are so similar can be a source of confusion.
- Further study was necessary to identify the source of the infection.

root noun [countable] the original and most important cause of something, especially a problem:

- They failed to get to the root of the problem. (=discover the main cause)
- Bad experiences in childhood lie at the root of many psychological disorders. (=they are the main cause)

VI CERTAINTY AND UNCERTAINTY

1. SAYING THAT YOU ARE CERTAIN ABOUT STH

certain adjective if you are certain about something, you are absolutely sure that it is true. If a fact is certain, it is definitely true, or it will definitely happen:

- I am certain that his analysis is correct.
- It now seems certain that the earth's climate is starting to change.
- One can never be absolutely certain of anything in science.
- The general addressed the troops before the battle, assuring them that victory was certain.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Certain is more formal than sure. It also sounds more definite.

sure adjective [not before noun] if you are sure about something, you believe that it is definitely true or correct:

- I am sure that many other writers share this view.
- It is difficult to be absolutely sure about when the photograph was taken.

convinced adjective [not before noun] completely sure that something is true, especially when you cannot prove it but you have strong feelings about it:

- She was convinced that her husband was innocent.
- They became convinced of the need for better health education.

confident adjective [not before noun] sure that something good will happen, or that you will be able to achieve what you want:

- The researchers were confident of success. (=they were sure that they would succeed)
- In his report he said he was confident that standards would improve.

satisfied adjective [not before noun] sure that something is true, because you have enough information to make a decision:

- Professor Knowles is now fully satisfied that (=completely satisfied) the drug is safe for general use.
- The insurance company needed to be satisfied that the damage was caused by the storm.

have no doubt/be in no doubt to be so certain about something that there are no doubts in your mind:

- I have no doubt that a cure for the disease will one day be found.
- He said that he was in no doubt that the fire was started deliberately.

without (a) doubt used when you are completely sure about something:

- She was without doubt one of Mexico's finest artists.
- His experience in London was, without doubt, very important to his career as a writer.
- Without a doubt, it is what we eat that determines our weight.

there is no doubt that (also there is no denying/disputing the fact that) used when you are completely sure about something:

- There is no doubt that violence on our TV screens does influence children.
- There is no denying the fact that these men are guilty of the most horrendous crimes.
- There is no disputing the fact that new technology has had a dramatic effect on our lives.

certainly/undoubtedly adverb used when you want to emphasize that you are certain of what you are saying:

- Businesses will certainly benefit from the new tax laws.
- Undoubtedly there is a link between smoking and lung cancer.
- Certainly it will be a long time before humans are able to live in other parts of the solar system.
- Beckham was the captain and undoubtedly the best known player in the England team.

2. SAYING THAT YOU ARE NOT CERTAIN ABOUT STH

not certain/uncertain adjective [not before noun] not sure about something:

- I am not certain that the figures are accurate.
- People often feel uncertain about how to deal with this type of situation.
- It is uncertain whether his death was accidental.
- It is by no means certain that she is right. (=it is not at all certain)

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Not certain/uncertain is more formal than not sure.

not sure/unsure adjective [not before noun] if you are not sure about something, you do not know exactly what it is, whether it is true, what to do etc:

- I am not sure whether this story is true or not.
- Police are still unsure about the precise details of what happened.
- Scientists are not entirely sure that (=not completely sure) life does exist in other parts of the universe.

have doubts if you have doubts about something, you are not sure if it is true, correct, or suitable:

- Many people have doubts about the methods used in the research.
- Doctors have doubts as to whether these alternative treatments really work.

be dubious about something to not feel sure that you should do something, because you can think of ways in which it could cause problems or go wrong:

- The writer is dubious about the effectiveness of prison as a way of dealing with drug-related problems.
- Most medical schools are dubious about accepting students older than 30.

VII COMPARING AND CONTRASTING

compared to/with used when comparing things or people, especially when comparing numbers or amounts:

- This year's profits are much higher compared to last year's.

- The average male now has a life expectancy of 77.6 years, compared with 75 in 1960.
- Total spending on health care represents about 4 percent of GDP. Compared to most other advanced economies, that figure is low.
- Mortality rates are lower for women as compared with men.

by comparison/in comparison when compared with another thing, person etc:

- Young male drivers have far more accidents by comparison with other groups.
- Wages are low in comparison with the US.
- In his early pictures he used rather dull colours. His later work is much brighter in comparison.
- The amount of money spent on advertising milk pales in comparison to (=is much less than) the money spent on advertising beer.

next to/beside preposition used when comparing things or people, especially when there is a surprising difference between them:

- Our problems seem trivial next to those faced by people in the developing world.
- Their achievements pale beside his. (=they seem much less important)

as against/as opposed to conjunction used when you are comparing two figures or pieces of information, in order to show how they are different:

- The company achieved sales of \$404 million, as against \$310 million in the previous year.
- One study predicted that 42% of female university graduates would remain single the rest of their lives, as opposed to just 5% of male graduates.

unlike preposition used when saying that people or things are different:

- Unlike his brother, he had no interest in music.
- The drug has very few side effects, unlike other drugs that are used to treat this illness.

in contrast/by contrast used when mentioning the difference between two things, people, countries etc that you are comparing:

- In contrast to the south of the island, the north is still untouched by tourism.
- The US and Australia, in contrast with most other leading industrialized nations, chose not to sign the Kyoto Protocol on climate change.
- Studies show that each execution costs \$3.5 million. By contrast it costs about \$600,000 to keep someone in prison for life.

in proportion to/in relation to used when considering the relationship between the amount or size of something compared to another thing:

- People from Sweden pay the highest rates of tax in proportion to their incomes.
- His head is big in proportion to the rest of his body.
- Britain's national debt was greater than that of the US in relation to the size of its economy.

relative adjective used when comparing the amount of something that someone or something has, with others of the same type:

- In his article he compares the relative merits of living in the countryside and living in a big city.

- It is too early to make a judgement about the relative importance of these different factors.
- How do we account for the relative lack of women studying physics at university?

compare verb [transitive] to examine or consider two or more things or people, in order to show how they are similar or different:

- A study by Nottingham University compared the cost of recycling plastic bags with making them from scratch.
- Galileo compared the time it took for different types of object to fall to the ground.
- The graph compares the number of students joining the university to study history and chemistry.

make/draw a comparison to compare two or more things or people and say how they are similar:

- In her article, she makes a comparison between people's lives now and 50 years ago.
- It is possible to draw a comparison between the two poets' work.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Draw a comparison is more formal than make a comparison.

draw an analogy to say that two situations are similar:

- Some people have attempted to draw an analogy between America's invasion of Iraq and the war in Vietnam.

draw a parallel to say that some aspects of two very different things are similar:

- The writer draws a parallel between Henry James's elaborate style of writing and the ingenious patterns and curious details in Minton's paintings.
- Parallels can be drawn between her work and that of Picasso.

liken somebody/something to phrasal verb to say that someone or something is similar to another person or thing:

- Gambling is often likened to drug addiction.
- Critics have likened the play to Arthur Miller's work.

contrast verb [transitive] to compare two things, situations etc, in order to show how they are different from each other:

- In her novel she contrasts the lives of two families in very different circumstances.

make/draw a distinction between to say that you think two things are very different:

- It is important to make a distinction between people's fears about crime and the real situation.
- The author draws a distinction between allowing death to occur, and causing it.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Draw a distinction is more formal than make a distinction.

VIII CONCLUDING

1. CONCLUDING YOUR ESSAY OR ARGUMENT

in conclusion a phrase used at the beginning of the final paragraph of an essay or article, when you want to write about the main things that you have mentioned in it:

- In conclusion, the results of our study suggest that this type of diet is perfectly safe.
- Thus, in conclusion, the population of England remained fairly stable for much of the 15th century.

to summarize/to sum up used when referring to the main things that you have mentioned in it:

- To summarize: there are many reasons why people commit crime.
- To sum up, in 1922 the Soviet government found itself in a situation similar to the one faced by the Tsars.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

You use to summarize and to sum up at the start of the final paragraph of an essay or article. They can be followed either by a colon or a comma.

something can be summarized as follows used when saying what you think the main points about something are:

- The organization's main aim can be summarized as follows: to create opportunities for students to learn a wide range of computer skills.
- The result of the survey can be summarized as follows. Both Japan and Korea show a strong preference for natural gas over oil, coal, and nuclear energy.

the following conclusion(s) may be drawn used when you want to mention something that you think is true because of what has been written earlier in the article or essay:

- The following conclusions may be drawn from these figures. Firstly, the US economy is moving out of recession. Secondly, there are no grounds for concern about its immediate future.
- With regard to defense measures against attack from the air, the following conclusions may be drawn. The best method of defense is a strong air force. The next requirement is a well-organized observation (radar) and warning system.

the main conclusion to be drawn is that used when you want to mention the main point that you think is true because of what has been written earlier in the article or essay:

- The main conclusion to be drawn from this discussion is that the best way to help slow readers is to improve their skill at recognizing individual words.

2. SAYING AGAIN WHAT YOUR AIMS WERE AT THE END OF THE ESSAY

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

When you are writing the concluding paragraph of an essay, report etc, you often begin by saying what you wanted to achieve when you were writing the essay. The following are some phrases you can use.

the purpose/aim of this ... was to ... used at the end of an essay, article, report, etc, when saying what its purpose was and whether you have succeeded, what you have found, etc:

- The aim of this study was to determine whether it is possible to reduce the amount of salt in bread without spoiling its taste.

in this ... I have tried/attempted to ... used at the end of an essay, article, report, etc, when saying what its purpose was and whether you have succeeded, what you have found, etc:

- In this essay, I have tried to set out the main events that led to the start of the First World War.
- In this report, we have attempted to demonstrate that although nuclear power is cleaner than using gas or coal, it is more expensive in the long-term.

IX DECREASING

1. TO DECREASE

decrease verb [intransitive] to become less in number or amount:

- The average rainfall has decreased by around 30 percent.
- The total number of people who are unemployed has decreased slightly.
- After radiotherapy, the number of tumours decreased significantly.
- The effectiveness of the drug gradually decreases.

go down phrasal verb to decrease:

- The percentage of fat in our diets has gone down.
- As a result of the improvements, complaints from customers went down by more than 70%.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Decrease is more formal than go down.

If you want to say that something 'has decreased', you can say that it is down, for example: Inflation is down to 4%.

decline verb [intransitive] a formal word meaning to decrease. Decline is used about numbers or amounts, and also about the level or standard of something:

- In rural areas, the standard of living continued to decline.
- Salaries have effectively declined by around 4.5%.
- The rate of inflation has declined sharply in the past year. (=quickly and by a large amount)
- Support for the government is steadily declining.
- The city has declined in importance.

fall/drop verb [intransitive] to decrease, especially by a large amount:

- The number of tigers in the wild has fallen to just over 10,000.
- At night, the temperature drops to minus 20 degrees.

- Profits fell from £98.5 million to £76 million.
- In May, the price of coffee dropped by over 20%..

plunge/plummet verb [intransitive] to suddenly decrease very quickly and by a very large amount:

- Gas prices have plunged 31 percent in less than a week.
- Sales of red meat are plummeting.
- Climate change could cause global temperatures to plummet.

halve verb [intransitive] to decrease by a half:

- He expects the number of farms to halve by 2020.
- In 1965, 49% of Canadians smoked. This figure has more than halved.

diminish verb [intransitive] to decrease to a low number, amount, or level. Diminish is used about numbers or amounts. It is also used when saying that a feeling becomes less strong, or that something becomes less important:

- The numbers of fish have diminished over the years.
- The population of the town diminished from 32,000 to 9,000 between 1871 and 1913.
- The pain gradually diminished.
- Although Campbell's influence had diminished, he continued to speak out against the war.

dwindle verb [intransitive] to gradually decrease until there is very little left of something. Dwindle is used about numbers or amounts. It is also used when saying that something becomes less popular, less important etc:

- The birds' numbers have slowly dwindled, until there are now only about 600 left in the world.
- Traffic along the canals dwindled during the 20th century.
- Support for the theory is dwindling.

2. TO MAKE STH DECREASE

reduce verb [transitive] to make something smaller in size, number or amount:

- The army was greatly reduced in size.
- The number of serious accidents has been reduced by a quarter.
- Doctors are urging people to reduce the amount of salt in their diet.
- Using new technology will help to reduce costs.
- Washing your hands helps to reduce the risk of infection.
- The ability to communicate cheaply over long distances has reduced the need for workers to commute to offices.

lower verb [transitive] to reduce the amount or level of something:

- It is a basic rule in economics that if you want people to buy more of your products, you lower the price.
- The voting age was lowered to 18.
- They decided to lower interest rates by a quarter of a percent.
- The drug is used to lower blood pressure.
- Some colleges have had to lower their standards.
- To cool, the motor forces air out of the box, so lowering the temperature.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Lower is used especially in more formal contexts, for example when writing about politics, business, or technical matters. Bring down is less formal.

bring down phrasal verb to reduce something such as prices or costs, or reduce the level of something:

- They used cheaper materials in an effort to bring down costs.
- The wage freeze was part of a campaign to bring down inflation.

cut verb [transitive] to reduce something such as prices, costs, time, or money, usually by a large amount:

- Companies are constantly looking for ways to cut their costs.
- Shell is to cut the price of petrol by 18p a gallon from midnight tomorrow.
- The new service will cut the journey time from London to Manchester to just over 2 hours.
- The working week has been cut from 39 hours to 35.

halve verb [transitive] to reduce something by a half:

- Costs were halved.
- The new drugs have halved the number of deaths among AIDS patients.

relieve/ease verb [transitive] to make pain or feelings less unpleasant:

- Doctors are allowed to give drugs to relieve pain, even if they shorten life.
- Accordingly, they hired more telephone representatives to relieve the pressure on employees who handle customer complaints and inquiries.
- Making a joke can help to relieve the tension.

alleviate verb [transitive] a formal word meaning to reduce pain or suffering, or make a problem less serious:

- Gentle regular exercise helps to alleviate the problem.
- Changes in diet can help to alleviate the symptoms of the disease.

3. A DECREASE

decrease noun [uncountable and countable] used when something happens less than it used to:

- There has been a significant decrease in the number of deaths from lung cancer.
- In August there was a slight decrease in the rate of unemployment.
- Latest figures show an overall 27% decrease in crime in the area since the project began.

reduction noun [uncountable and countable] used when the price, amount, or level of something is made lower:

- A small reduction in costs can mean a large increase in profits.
- There has been a significant reduction in traffic.
- Over the last few years there has been a dramatic reduction in (=surprisingly large) the number of people arrested for drink-driving.

cut noun [countable] used when a government or company reduces the price, amount, or level of something:

- price cuts
- tax cuts
- pay cuts
- The company is planning further job cuts.
- There have been major cuts in government spending on defence.
- The state of California introduced new laws requiring drastic cuts in (=very big cuts) air pollution from automobiles.
- The bank announced a 1 per cent cut in interest rates.

drop/fall noun [countable] used when a number or amount goes down, especially by a large amount:

- The company reported a 35% drop in profits.
- Researchers found that the number of trees had gone down from 506 to 261, a drop of 48 percent.
- Spain has suffered a sharp fall in its birth rate. (=a sudden very large fall)

decline noun [singular, uncountable] a formal word, used when the number, amount, level, or standard of something goes down:

- There has been a gradual decline in the number of homeless people.
- Television is often blamed for the decline in moral standards in our society.
- There has been a slight decline in the level of violence.
- Four years ago, there were 580 people living on the island, but there are now only 337. That is a decline of 42 percent.

4. WHEN STH STOPS DECREASING

level off/out phrasal verb to stop decreasing and remain at the same level:

- The population dropped from a peak of 800,000, levelling off in 1999 at 650,000.
- Latest figures suggest inflation will level out at 2.4% after a year at over 3%.

bottom out phrasal verb to reach the lowest point, and stop decreasing any more:

- The decline in car sales finally showed signs of bottoming out in September.
- There is no evidence that the recession has bottomed out yet.

X DISAGREEING

1. TO DISAGREE WITH SOMEONE OR AN OPINION

disagree/not agree verb [intransitive]:

- Scholars continue to disagree about the meaning behind the poem.
- Although he did not agree with Plato, he was profoundly influenced by him.
- Scientists disagree among themselves on what causes the disease.
- I strongly disagree with his views on immigration. (=I disagree with them very much)

take issue with a formal phrase meaning to strongly disagree with what someone has said:

- I feel that I must take issue with the article's conclusion.

- Some people have taken issue with Conrad's description of the Congo in his novel 'The Heart of Darkness'.

dispute verb [transitive] to say that you think that something is not correct or not true:

- Researchers have disputed her claims.
- No one disputes that the problem exists.

differ verb [intransitive] if people differ about something, they have a range of different opinions about it. If opinions, views, or tastes differ, people have different opinions, views, or tastes:

- Critics differed sharply on the merits of his work. (=they had very different opinions)
- Opinions differ about the proper relationship between the mass media and society.

be divided/split adjective if a group of people is divided or split on something, some of them have one opinion and others have a completely different opinion:

- America's doctors remain deeply divided on the issue of whether it should be legal for a physician to help a terminally ill patient commit suicide.
- Scientists were split on the uses to which the discoveries of atomic physics were being put.

be mistaken adjective used to say that you disagree with someone or with an opinion that they have, and think that they are wrong:

- He is mistaken if he believes that the United States will not respond to this threat.
- Such a view is, however, seriously mistaken.

2. WHEN PEOPLE DISAGREE ABOUT STH

disagreement noun [uncountable and countable] if there is disagreement about something, people do not agree about it:

- There is considerable disagreement among experts about the usefulness of these tests.
- She found herself in disagreement with her colleagues on the issue. (=she found that she disagreed with them about it)

dispute noun [uncountable and countable] a serious disagreement, in which two people, organizations, or countries publicly disagree and argue with each other:

- He became involved in a long legal dispute with his publisher.
- There is considerable dispute over the precise definition of this term.
- The United Nations is trying to settle the bitter and long-running dispute between the two countries.

controversy noun [uncountable and countable] serious disagreement, especially with people expressing strongly opposing views in newspapers, in books, on television etc:

- There has been a lot of controversy over abortion in the US.
- Alice Walker writes about the controversy surrounding the film version of her novel, 'The Color Purple'.
- There is some controversy among biologists about whether this is actually true.

3. CAUSING DISAGREEMENT

contentious adjective a formal word used to describe statements and situations that cause a lot of disagreement and argument:

- Water has been a contentious issue between Turkey and its neighbours for years.
- One particularly contentious area in the field of health and safety is the valuation of human life itself.

controversial adjective causing a lot of disagreement among people, with strongly opposing opinions being expressed in newspapers, in books, on television etc:

- The use of genetic tests is a controversial issue.
- The judge's decision was highly controversial at the time.
- Oliver Cromwell remains a somewhat controversial historical figure.

divisive adjective causing arguments between people and making them form into two opposing groups:

- The war was extremely divisive.
- Same-sex marriage remains a divisive issue in many parts of the US.

XI EFFECTS

1. SYNONYMS

effect noun [uncountable and countable] a change caused by something:

- She was one of the first scientists to study the effects of radiation on the human body.
- At first, the treatment seemed to have no effect.
- Some people believe that television has a positive effect on our lives, while others think that it has a negative effect.
- Building hundreds of new homes is likely to have an adverse effect on the environment. (=a bad effect)
- The food we eat has a significant effect upon our mental ability. (=an important and noticeable effect)
- The decision could have far-reaching effects. (=on a lot of things or people)

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Don't forget that effect is a noun and affect is a verb.

impact noun [uncountable and countable] the effect that something has, especially a big and permanent effect that happens as a result of something important:

- In practice, the change in the law did not have much impact.
- His work has had an enormous impact on the study of genetics. (=a very big impact)
- The war had a devastating impact on the country's industries. (=it caused a great amount of damage)
- Population growth will have a profound impact upon world demand for food. (=a very big impact)

influence noun [uncountable and countable] the effect that something has on people's opinions or behaviour, or on how something develops:

- In his book, McLuhan examines the influence of the media on our society.
- The English philosopher Thomas Hobbes had a considerable influence on Spinoza.
- For much of the 20th century, Berlin exerted a unique influence on the world. (=it had a unique influence)

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

The usual preposition to use with effect, impact, or influence is on. In formal English, people also use upon with the same meaning.

side effect noun [countable] an unwanted effect that something has in addition to its good effects. Side effect is used especially about drugs and medical treatment:

- Experts warn that this is a powerful drug which can have dangerous side effects.
- Common side effects of the treatment include headaches and muscle pains.

aftereffects noun [plural] bad effects that continue for a long time after the thing that caused them:

- The country is still suffering from the aftereffects of war.
- The aftereffects of the illness can last for months.

knock-on effect noun [uncountable and countable] a British English phrase, used when something has an effect on something, which then has an effect on something else:

- The strikes are likely to have a knock-on effect on the whole economy.
- If one flight is delayed, it can have knock-on effects on the other flights.

repercussions noun [plural] the bad effects that happen later as a result of an event, which continue for a long time afterwards:

- It was a major economic crisis with serious social and political repercussions.
- The scandal could have serious repercussions for her political career.

implications noun [plural] the possible effects that something is likely to have in the future:

- The results of the study could have important implications for future educational policy.
- Some people believe that the increase in air travel will have serious implications for the climate.

2. TO AFFECT STH OR SB

affect verb [transitive] to have an effect on something or someone:

- The disease affects women more than men.
- The island was badly affected by last month's storms.
- Smoking while you are pregnant can seriously affect the health of your unborn baby.
- Noise from the airport is adversely affecting the quality of life for local residents. (=it is having a bad effect on their lives)

be bad for to have a bad effect on someone or something:

- When companies close down it is bad for the local economy.
- Studies have shown that eating some types of fish can be bad for you.

be good for to have a good effect on someone or something:

- Mr Blair's speech contained analysis of how environmental action can be good for the economy and for business.
- Bread, especially brown bread, is good for you.

impact/impact on verb [intransitive and transitive] to affect something. Impact is used as a verb especially in business English:

- The recession in the US has negatively impacted sales of luxury cars. (=it has had a bad effect on sales)
- The new regulations will significantly impact on the way food companies operate. (=they will have an important and noticeable effect)

make a difference to have a noticeable effect on a situation:

- New drugs have made a big difference in the treatment of some forms of cancer.
- In practice it makes very little difference which type of oil you use.
- Choosing the right wine can make all the difference to a meal. (=the right choice will make it a very enjoyable meal)

influence verb [transitive] to have an effect on the way someone behaves or thinks, or on the way a situation develops:

- There is no convincing evidence that advertising influences total sales of alcohol.
- Morgan was heavily influenced by Darwin's ideas on evolution. (=he was greatly influenced by them)
- Levels of ozone are strongly influenced by annual variations in the weather.

XII EMPHASIZING

1. EMPHASIZING THAT STH IS IMPORTANT

I would like to stress that used when you want to emphasize that something is important:

- I would like to stress that the research is still at an early stage.
- I would like to stress that the characters in this poem bear no resemblance to real people.

it should be noted that a formal phrase used especially in articles and essays, when you want to emphasize that something is important:

- It should be noted that there are a number of alternative methods available.
- It should be noted that the general trend of increasing unemployment has continued over a number of years.

it is worth bearing in mind that used when you want to emphasize that it is important to remember something when you are considering a subject:

- It is worth bearing in mind that 90% of the scientists researching herbicides in the US are employed by chemical companies.

crucial adjective if something is crucial, it is extremely important:

- Burgin distinguishes between photographic theory and photographic criticism (Burgin 1982). This distinction is crucial.

- Factors such as temperature and acidity play a crucial role in determining how well the process works.

crucially Crucially, it was claimed that there was an increase in childhood cancers in areas surrounding nuclear power stations.

vital/essential adjective if something is vital or essential, it is extremely important, because without it there could be serious problems:

- These insects play a vital part in the food chain.
- It is essential that the work is carried out as soon as possible.

2. EMPHASIZING A PERSON OR A THING MORE THAN OTHERS

especially/particularly adverb:

- The climate is much colder, especially in the far north.
- There has been a big increase in alcohol consumption, particularly among young women.
- It is often mixed with other fibres, particularly cotton.
- He was very much influenced by Picasso, especially when he was young.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Especially and particularly are usually used before a noun phrase or at the beginning of a clause.

in particular used when you want to mention one person or thing that is more important than others or more affected by something than others:

- In the USA in particular, large numbers of ordinary citizens lost money by investing in internet companies.
- The work of Sally Mann, in particular, has made us question representations of children and childhood.
- One of the biggest environmental issues was the movement of hazardous waste. In particular, there was concern about rich, industrialized countries exporting such waste to poor developing countries.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

In particular is usually used after a noun phrase. It can also be used at the beginning of a sentence.

notably adverb used when saying that someone or something is an important example of something. Notably is a formal word, which is used especially in articles and essays:

- Some economists, most notably J. M. Keynes, recommended increasing government spending in times of recession, in order to stimulate the economy.
- In 1950, half the world's ships were built in the UK (notably in Liverpool, Sunderland, Belfast and Glasgow).

above all used when emphasizing that something is more important than the other things you have mentioned:

- Cycling is not only pollution-free but also flexible, cheap, and above all, healthy.
- Try to find out if your daughter has any other worries or problems. Above all, show her that you care and will give her all the support and help you can.

most of all more than anyone or anything else:

- America had become an importer of copper, lead, zinc, and most of all, oil.
- Most of all, we need an approach that works.

most importantly/most significantly:

- Perhaps most importantly, the nation seemed to have lost its pride and its sense of direction.
- The 18th century was a period of enormous social change. Most significantly, the Agricultural Revolution drove large numbers of workers into the cities.

3. TO EMPHASIZE STH

emphasize/stress verb [transitive] to say firmly that something is particularly important:

- In their report, they emphasized the need for better police training.
- She stresses that death is not always the aim of those who try to commit suicide.

highlight verb [transitive] to show that something such as a problem or fact is particularly important, especially by providing new information about it:

- This case highlights some of the problems associated with patients travelling long distances for treatment.
- Campbell is more concerned with highlighting the issues involved, rather than providing solutions.

underline/underscore verb [transitive] to show clearly that something is true:

- The high rate of mortality underlines the need for a greater understanding of the causes of the disease.
- Studies and statistics underscore the fact that much of the country's wealth is in the hands of a tiny minority.

draw attention to to say that something is important and needs to be considered, or to make people realise that something is important:

- A number of writers have drawn attention to this fact.
- The study was one of the first to draw attention to the problems faced by severely disabled adults.

point up phrasal verb to write about something in a way that shows it is very important:

- The report pointed up the need for more research on the subject

XIII EXPLAINING

1. SYNONYMS

explain verb [intransitive and transitive] to give someone the information that they need in order to understand something:

- He was the first scientist to explain how the process of evolution works.
- The book begins by explaining the difference between psychology and psychiatry.

- There are a number of theories which seek to explain why (=try to explain why) zebras have stripes.

give/offer/provide an explanation to explain something:

- He attempts to give a simple explanation of his theory.
- It is possible that some recent research by NASA scientists could offer an explanation for this phenomenon.
- They were unable to provide a satisfactory explanation for their behaviour.

set out phrasal verb to explain facts, reasons, plans etc by stating them clearly and in a carefully planned order:

- He sets out his plans for an ideal Roman city in the first volume of his work.
- The document sets out exactly how the money will be spent.

go through phrasal verb to explain all the details about something in the right order, so that someone can understand it:

- She begins her article by going through all the reasons why people have opposed the use of nuclear energy.

outline verb [transitive] to explain the main ideas about something, without giving all the details:

- In his introduction, Piaget outlines the four main stages in a child's development.
- The purpose of this chapter is to outline the basic principles which form the foundations of the English legal system.

expand on phrasal verb to add more details or information to what has already been said:

- Melville saw the ocean as the source of all life. He expands on this idea in his novel, 'Moby Dick'.
- The author expands on this theme at length (=writes a lot about it).

clarify verb [transitive] to make something clearer:

- This chapter aims to clarify some of the most important issues in genetics today.
- In his speech the prime minister attempted to clarify his position on economic reform.

2. WHAT YOU SAY WHEN YOU ARE EXPLAINING STH

this means that/which means that used when saying what the results or effects of what you have just said are:

- Computer technology is constantly being improved. This means that the computer that you have just bought will probably be out of date in only a few months' time.
- There is a shortage of hospital doctors, which means that patients often have to wait a long time for treatment.
- The bank's current interest rate is 3.5%. This means that for every £100 you have in your savings account, you will get £3.50 in interest.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

You use This means that at the beginning of a sentence. You use which means that at the beginning of a clause.

that is used when explaining the meaning of the previous word or phrase, by giving more information:

- The book is about art in the modern period, that is, art since 1900.
- Her son suffers from Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. That is, he finds it difficult to pay attention or stay quiet for more than a short period of time.

ie/i.e. used when explaining the meaning of the previous word or phrase, by giving more information:

- The new law will come into force at the end of next month, ie March 31st.
- There has been a decline in the number of 'good' jobs, i.e. ones that are highly skilled and well-paid.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

ie is the abbreviation for id est, which is Latin for that is.

In formal essay writing, it is usually better to use that is.

in other words/to put it another way used when saying something in a different way, either in order to explain it more clearly, or to emphasize the point that you want to make:

- Average incomes fell, while the incomes of the top 20 percent of the population increased. In other words, the rich got richer.
- In a democracy, the government must be accountable to the people. The people should, in other words, be able to get rid of their rulers through elections.
- Using this software would offer a 15% saving in space. To put it another way, this will mean an extra 12Gb free on an 80Gb disk.

to put it simply used when saying something in a simple way so that the reader can understand what you mean:

- What the treatment aims to do, to put it simply, is to make the skin grow back over the wound.
- A romantic novel should demand a certain level of emotional involvement on the part of the reader. To put it simply, the novel should not just describe a love relationship; it should allow the reader to participate in it.

specifically adverb used when saying exactly what you are referring to, when you are explaining something:

- Several prisoners reported some kind of physical abuse. Specifically, 42 were beaten; eight were roughly handled; and four more were forced to remain standing for hours at a time.
- What we need is a stable economic climate that encourages companies to invest on a long-term basis. More specifically, we need to get rid of the current high taxes on investment income.

XIV GIVING EXAMPLES

1. WHAT YOU SAY WHEN YOU ARE GIVING EXAMPLES

for example used when giving an example of the kind of thing that you have just mentioned:

- People watch huge amounts of television. In the United States, for example, many children spend more hours watching television than they do attending school.
- A lot of English words come from Latin. For example 'homicide' comes from the Latin words 'homo' (=man) and 'cidium' (=killing).

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

In essays, for example is often used later on in a sentence, rather than at the beginning: The influence of Eastern music can be heard in Western classical music, for example in the piano works of Debussy.

The abbreviation of for example is eg. In formal essays you usually use the full phrase for example.

for instance means the same as for example, but it is slightly less formal:

- Our climate is already showing signs of change. Last year, for instance, was one of the hottest summers on record.
- There is a great deal we can do to reduce the amount of pollution we produce. For instance, we can use our cars less, and use public transport instead.

particularly/in particular adverb used when saying that something is especially true about someone or something:

- Tourism is very important for the economy, particularly in the south of the country.
- His work had a big influence on Picasso in particular.

be a good/typical/classic/obvious etc example:

- The United Kingdom is a good example of a country that consists of several smaller states.
- Her case is a classic example of this kind of problem.

be a case in point used when saying that something is a very good and relevant example of the kind of thing that you have just mentioned:

- Many native English plants and animals are under threat. The red squirrel is a case in point.
- The government has consistently ignored basic human rights. A case in point is the recent killing of 10 political prisoners.

take/consider verb [transitive] used when you are about to talk about a particular situation that you want to show as an example:

- Science has yet to answer some important questions. Take, for instance, (=consider the following example) the theory that the universe started with the 'big bang'. What came before the big bang?
- Many students are bored with their studies. Consider the case of Christina. She is a hard-working student who plans to go to college. Yet she says of her education, "It's not like I'm thinking a lot here."

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Take and consider are always used at the start of a sentence.

by way of illustration a formal phrase, used especially when you are going to give a long example that shows what you mean:

- Revolutions often lead to dictatorships. By way of illustration, consider the events that followed the French Revolution.

- Plants have been used in Cambodia in many ways for many centuries. By way of illustration, of the 2,300 species of plants in Cambodia, approximately 40 percent have a traditional use, primarily as food and medicine.

be shown by used when giving an example which shows that what you are saying is true:

- The people who live there are quite rich. This is shown by the size of their houses.
- Metal tools were produced here for thousands of years, as is shown by weapons discovered in ancient tombs.

this is true of/this was true of used when giving an example which shows that what you are saying is true:

- Many writers have suffered from discrimination. This was true of Oscar Wilde, and also of André Gide.

2. WHAT YOU SAY WHEN THERE ARE A LOT OF EXAMPLES OF STH

such as used when giving one or two typical examples of the kind of thing or person that you mean, when there are many other examples:

- The factory produced electrical goods such as washing machines and cookers.
- Girls do better than boys in subjects such as English.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Such as does not usually have a comma before it, whereas for example and including usually do.

including preposition used when you want to give examples of the kinds of thing that something includes:

- She has many interests, including opera and ballet.
- The company produces 340 drugs and cosmetic products, including penicillin, antibiotics and aspirins.

to name but a few used after examples of something, when saying that there are many more that you could mention:

- He wrote several famous books: '1984', 'Animal Farm', and 'The Road to Wigan Pier', to name but a few.

etc/et cetera adverb used when you want to say that there are many other examples of other things of the same kind:

- It is best to avoid tea, coffee, alcohol etc.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

In formal essays it is better not to use etc, and to rephrase the sentence using such as: It is best to avoid drinks such as tea, coffee, or alcohol.

Do not use eg and etc in the same sentence.

3. TO GIVE STH OR SB AS AN EXAMPLE

give the example of something/give something as an example:

- The writer gives the example of Johnny Saxon who, three years after winning the world boxing title, was charged with burglary.

- He gives as an example the island of Aru in southeast Indonesia, where the number of turtles has decreased dramatically.

cite verb [transitive] a formal word meaning to give something or someone an example:

- She cites a survey last year, which showed that 84 percent of shoppers would be prepared to return containers to retailers if supermarkets set up a suitable system.
- Sendak cites Tolstoy as an example of an author who needs no illustrator.

XV GIVING EXCEPTIONS

1. SB OR STH IS AN EXCEPTION

except preposition used when saying that a statement does not include a particular person or thing:

- The office is open every day except Sundays.
- Most of the critics liked the play, except for one critic on the Los Angeles Times.
- Except for a few years in the early sixties and seventies, inflation has been a continuing feature of American life since World War II.
- The area looks very much like the state of Iowa, except that it is surrounded by beautiful snow-covered mountains.
- Except in an emergency, these doors must remain closed.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Except and except for mean the same thing. You can use except for and except in at the beginning of a sentence. Otherwise, except does not come at the beginning of a sentence.

apart from/aside from preposition used when mentioning one or two things that do not fit the main thing that you are saying, especially when they are not very important:

- Aside from one or two minor errors, this is an excellent piece of research.
- The films were all made in Hollywood, apart from one, which was made in the UK.
- The weather was not very good in the first week. Apart from that, it was a good holiday.

excluding/not including preposition used when saying that something, especially a total number or amount, does not include a particular thing or person:

- The software costs \$49.95, not including tax.
- Excluding students, the total number of unemployed rose from 2 million to 2.3 million.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Excluding is more formal than not including.

with the exception of/with one exception formal phrases used when you want to emphasize that something does not include a particular thing or person:

- Denmark has more wind turbines than any other place in the world, with the exception of California.
- With the exception of skin cancer, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women.

- The prisons are, with one exception, overcrowded and lacking in facilities for prisoners.

but preposition used especially after nothing, no one, any, anyone, anything, all, everything and everyone, when saying that something is the only thing, or someone is the only person:

- There is nothing but trees, for mile after mile.
- The garment covers everything but the eyes.
- All but a few of her family died of the disease.

other than a phrase meaning except, used especially in negative sentences:

- He had no interests other than teaching.
- No one other than her knew about the plan.
- Daley has said little about his childhood, other than that it was happy and normal.
- Some airlines will not allow you to take pets other than dogs, cats and birds.

in a few cases/in a small number of cases used when emphasizing that something only happens a few times or to a few people:

- In a few cases the information has gone missing from the files.
- Surgery can only help in a small number of cases.

2. SB OR STH IS NOT INCLUDED

exception noun [uncountable and countable] someone or something that is different from the others and cannot therefore be included in a statement:

- The health of most of the patients improved, although there were one or two exceptions, (=one or two patients did not get better)
- Apart from a few minor exceptions (=unimportant exceptions), the two countries' legal systems are very similar.
- Not many first-rate writers have written about film. A notable exception (=an important exception) is Grahame Greene, who reviewed movies regularly between 1935 and 1940.
- All societies, without exception, share the same characteristics. (=used when saying that there are no exceptions)

XVI GIVING OPINIONS

1. GIVING YOUR OPINION ABOUT STH

in my opinion/in my view used when giving your opinion about something:

- Their concerns are, in my opinion, fully justified.
- In my opinion, the cathedral is one of the world's most beautiful churches.
- In my view, the court made the right decision.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Don't say 'According to my opinion' when you mean in my opinion.

I think that used when giving your opinion about something:

- I think that everyone should be able to own their own home.

- I think that hunting should be banned.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

In formal essay writing, people often try to avoid using phrases with 'I' or 'me', and use more impersonal phrases such as in this writer's view or in this writer's opinion.

When you are writing essays, it is a good idea to quote another writer to support your argument, rather than just say I think that ... This will give your argument much more authority. For example: As Hobsbawm (1969) has pointed out, the rise of the cotton industry created a huge demand for cotton goods.

in this writer's view/opinion used in formal essays when giving your opinion:

- In this writer's view, the present system is in need of reform.
- In this writer's opinion, the arguments against using nuclear energy are overwhelming.

it seems to me that used when saying that you think that something is probably true. You use this especially when you have considered a situation carefully and want to give your overall opinion about it:

- It seems to me that there is some truth in her argument.

I believe that used about strongly held beliefs, for example about moral issues:

- I believe that the death penalty is morally wrong.

2. SAYING WHAT ANOTHER PERSON'S OPINION IS

somebody's opinion/view is that used when saying what another writer's opinion is about something:

- The judge's opinion was that she was fit to stand trial.
- His view is that consumers should be told the whole truth about the product they are buying.
- The general opinion is that the combined vaccine works better. (=most people think this)

in somebody's opinion/view used when saying what another writer's opinion is about something:

- The important thing, in Galileo's opinion, was to accept the facts and build a theory to fit them.
- Criticism is quite different, in Barthes's view, from ordinary reading.
- In his opinion, the portrait painter seeks to capture the moment when the model looks most like himself or herself.

be of the opinion that/take the view that to have a particular opinion. These are formal phrases:

- Until then, most scientists were of the opinion that these variations in weather were compatible with established climate patterns.
- Levitt takes the view that low prices are the key to marketing success.

have/hold an opinion to have a particular opinion:

- Everybody has a different opinion of what America represents.
- They held the same opinions on many issues.
- Voters tend to have a low opinion of politicians. (=think they are not very good)

- Teenage girls generally have a higher opinion of themselves as learners than boys, according to a recent study. (=they think that they are better)

for somebody preposition used when saying what someone's opinion is, especially when this is a general opinion which also affects their other ideas about a subject. For somebody is usually used at the beginning of a sentence:

- For Chomsky, language is an abstract system of rules which is used by human minds for transmitting and receiving ideas.
- For Vygotsky, social factors play a fundamental role in intellectual development.

as far as somebody is concerned used when you want to emphasize that you are talking about the opinion of a particular person or group:

- As far as he was concerned, the failure showed the limits of military intervention.
- The election was a formality as far as the ruling party was concerned.

from sb's point of view used when saying what someone's reaction to something is, based on how it affects them:

- From their point of view, the system worked quite well.
- It is important to consider the situation from the point of view of the ordinary man in the street.

3. SAYING WHAT YOUR OPINION IS ABOUT STH

give/express/voice an opinion to say what you think about something:

- Other writers have expressed similar opinions on the subject.
- In his speech he was simply voicing an opinion that was held by many people at the time.
- The commission has yet to give its opinion on the matter.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Express and voice an opinion are more formal than give an opinion, but mean the same thing.

make your views known (about something) to tell people about your opinions, especially so that they can be considered when making decisions about something that affects you:

- Old people seldom have the opportunity to make their views known.

XVII GIVING REASONS

1. WHAT YOU SAY WHEN GIVING REASONS

because conjunction used when giving the reason for something:

- The idea was rejected because it was too expensive.
- They were discriminated against because of their colour.
- Because many old people are on low incomes, they are often unable to afford adequate heating in the winter.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

When writing essays, you don't usually use *because* at the beginning of a sentence when you are referring back to the previous sentence. For example, instead of writing "Many firms are building factories there. *Because* wages are much lower." it is much better to write: Many firms are building factories there *because* wages are much lower. But if the two sentences you want to connect are very long, you can write *The reason is* or *The reason for this is* at the start of a second sentence.

the reason (for this) is used when giving the reason for something, especially when the explanation is quite long:

- These printers quickly achieved a market share of over 60%. *The reason for this is* that the technology they use is much simpler — and therefore cheaper — and running costs are lower.

why conjunction used when writing about the reason that causes something to happen:

- No one knows *why* the dinosaurs died out so suddenly.
- There are many reasons *why* people are having fewer children.
- Girls mature earlier than boys. This may explain *why* they perform better at school.

in order to so that someone can do something, or so that something can happen:

- Many criminals steal *in order to* get money to buy drugs. (=the reason they steal is so that they can buy drugs)

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

In order to is typically used in formal English. In less formal contexts, you often just use *to*, for example: I wanted to go to France to improve my knowledge of the language.

for preposition because of a particular reason:

- Most people go there *for* sightseeing.
- The names cannot be published *for* legal reasons.
- The data will be used *for* research purposes.

through preposition used when explaining why someone succeeded or failed:

- She got the job *through* hard work. (=because she worked very hard)
- The records were lost, either *through* carelessness or incompetence.

as a result of used when explaining what made something happen:

- Sea levels are rising *as a result of* global warming.
- *As a result of* his work, illnesses such as tuberculosis can now be treated.

due to/owing to preposition used to give the reason why something has happened:

- She resigned *due to* ill health.
- The number of songbirds has declined. This is partly *due to* modern farming methods.
- *Owing to* lack of public interest, the programme was abandoned.

2. SYNONYMS

reason noun [countable] why something happens or why someone does something:

- There were two main reasons *for* his success.

- 39% of workers gave poor working conditions as a reason for leaving their previous job.
- The reasons why this happens are as follows.
- The reason that sales have not increased is that we had a very cold summer.
- There are good reasons for believing that the Earth has not increased in size during the past 500,000 years.

explanation noun [countable] a set of reasons that is intended to help you understand why something happens:

- Scientists have offered several possible explanations for these results.
- No one has ever really provided a satisfactory explanation of how children learn language.

motive noun [countable] the reason that makes someone decide to do something, especially something dishonest:

- There may have been a political motive for the killing.
- Some people have questioned the motives behind the decision.

grounds noun [plural] a reason that makes it right or fair for someone to do something. You use grounds especially when saying that it seems justified to think that something is true, or when an action is justified according to official rules:

- There are strong grounds for believing that what he says is true.
- The latest crime statistics provide some grounds for optimism.
- He was refused permission to stay on the grounds that he had entered the country illegally. (=for that reason)
- They recommended joining the EU on purely economic grounds. (=only for economic reasons)

argument noun [countable] a reason or set of reasons that someone uses to try to persuade another person to agree with them:

- There are strong environmental arguments for limiting car use.
- One of the main arguments against the death penalty is that an innocent person could accidentally be executed.
- I do not agree with the argument that experiments are necessary on live animals.
- There is little evidence to support their argument.
- He was the first person to put forward this argument. (=to suggest this set of reasons)

rationale noun [countable usually singular] a series of reasons that someone uses to explain why they need to do something in a particular way:

- All organisations need a rationale for dividing up their work.
- In the first part of the book I will attempt to provide a rationale for such an approach.
- The document outlines the rationale behind the government's economic reforms.

justification noun [uncountable and countable] a reason why you think it is right to do something, especially something that seems wrong or unfair to other people:

- The US government's main justification for the war was that they wanted to bring democracy to the country.
- There is, he states, no justification for killing another human being under any circumstances.

basis noun [countable] the main ideas, reasons, arguments etc on which something is based:

- There is no scientific basis for such beliefs.
- Piaget provided a theoretical basis for studying children's mental behaviour.
- Newton's work forms the basis of much of modern physics.

3. A REASON THAT DOES NOT SEEM BELIEVABLE

pretext noun [countable] a false reason that someone gives in order to hide their real reason for doing something:

- They used religion as a pretext for their activities.
- People were sent to prison or labour camps on the flimsiest of pretexts. (=for reasons that seem very unlikely and difficult to believe)
- Police went into the area under the pretext of looking for drug dealers. (=using this as a reason)

excuse noun [countable] a reason that you give to try to explain why you did something bad, especially one that is not true:

- Poverty should not be seen as an excuse for crime.
- The soldiers' excuse was that they were only obeying orders.
- People are tired of listening to the same old feeble excuses. (=excuses that seem very weak and not believable)

XVIII INCREASING

1. TO INCREASE

increase verb [intransitive] to become larger in number, amount, price, or value:

- Last year, the number of burglaries increased by 15 percent.
- The percentage of households with a computer increased from 32.9% to 52%.
- The world's population is increasing at a rate of 91 million people each year.
- Land prices have increased dramatically during the last thirty years. (=by a surprisingly large amount)
- The ratio of women to men in management positions has been increasing steadily. (=more women are becoming managers)

rise/go up verb [intransitive] phrasal verb to increase. Rise and go up are used especially about numbers, prices or temperatures. They can also be used about the level or standard of something:

- Fuel prices rose by over 10 percent.
- Last month unemployment went up from 1.6 million to just over 1.7 million.
- Crime rates have risen sharply in inner city areas. (=they have increased by a large amount in a short time)
- World demand for oil is rising steadily at around 2 percent a year.
- Sea temperatures have been rising gradually over the past 30 years.
- Living standards have gone up dramatically. (=by a surprisingly large amount)

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Rise is more formal than go up.

If you want to say that something 'has increased', you can say that it is up, for example: Profits are up by almost 50%.

grow verb [intransitive] to increase, especially gradually over a period of time. Grow is used about numbers or amounts, or about the total amount of business or trade:

- The volume of traffic on our roads continues to grow.
- The economy is growing by about 2.5% a year.
- Since 1990, U.S. imports of foreign goods have grown at a rate of 7.7 percent per year.

double/triple/quadruple verb [intransitive] to become twice as much, three times as much, or four times as much:

- Since 1950, the number of people dying from cancer has almost doubled.
- During the last 15 years, earnings have tripled for men and doubled for women.
- The production of maize quadrupled.

expand verb [intransitive] to become larger in size, or to include a wider range of activities:

- After two years of no growth, the economy started to expand again in 2003.
- The report estimates that up to 40,000 plants could die out if the population expands from 6 billion to 8 billion by 2020, as currently predicted.

soar verb [intransitive] to increase and reach a very high level. Soar is used about numbers and amounts, or about people's feelings and attitudes, and is especially used in journalism:

- Interest rates soared to over 100 percent.
- The rumours sent house prices soaring. (=made them increase to a very high level)
- The president's popularity soared. (=he became extremely popular)

escalate verb [intransitive] to increase to a high level. Escalate is used about things that you do not want to increase such as costs, crimes, or violence:

- Energy costs have escalated.
- The violence began to escalate and the demonstrators started attacking the police.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

The -ing forms of many of these verbs can also be used as adjectives, for example: the increasing demand for cheap goods

- rising unemployment
- the growing problem of industrial pollution
- soaring inflation
- escalating fuel costs

2. TO MAKE STH INCREASE

increase verb [transitive] to make something become larger in number, amount, price, or value:

- The company wants to increase the number of phones it sells in the UK.
- Smoking increases the risk of a heart attack by almost ten times.

raise verb [transitive] to increase prices, taxes, rents etc. Raise is also used about increasing levels and standards:

- The government will either have to raise taxes or reduce spending.
- The price of a barrel of oil was raised to over \$30.
- The government says that it wants to raise standards in schools.
- Saturated fats, which are found mostly in animal products, raise the level of cholesterol in the blood.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Don't confuse rise and raise. Don't say 'I don't think it would be a good idea to rise cigarette prices'. Say: I don't think it would be a good idea to raise cigarette prices.

Raise is more formal than put up.

put up phrasal verb to increase prices, taxes, rents etc:

- The company plans to put up the price of the drug by up to 20 percent.
- In the long term, unless the economy recovers, the government will be forced to put up taxes.

double/triple/quadruple verb [transitive] to increase the amount of something so that it is twice, three times, or four times as much:

- The United States has more than doubled the amount of aid it gives to developing countries.
- The company hopes to triple the size of its packaging business.

expand verb [transitive] to increase something so that it includes a wider range of things, or to increase the size of a business:

- The college is expanding its range of courses.
- Within a few months she expanded the business and took over a computer firm employing 120 people.

boost verb [transitive] to increase sales, profits, or the production of something, especially when they have been lower than you want them to be:

- Farmers can boost their profits by selling direct to customers.
- The hot weather has boosted sales of ice cream.
- Scientists are helping to boost rice production using genetically modified rice.

extend verb [transitive] to increase your power or influence, or to increase the number of things that you are involved in:

- The US wants to extend its influence in the region.
- Banks are extending the scope of their activities and are offering services such as insurance and advice on investments.

step up phrasal verb to increase your efforts or activities, especially in order to change a situation:

- The UN Security Council has stepped up the pressure on the Sudanese government to end the fighting.
- The organization is stepping up its campaign to persuade drivers to leave their cars at home and take public transport.

add to phrasal verb to cause something to increase in cost or value, or to cause a situation to become worse or more difficult:

- Rising fuel prices will add to the cost of basic goods.
- A new kitchen can add to the value of your home.
- The swarms of mosquitoes only added to their problems.
- Just to add to the confusion, there are several other common names for this plant.

3. AN INCREASE

increase noun [uncountable and countable] an occasion when the amount or number of something becomes bigger:

- There has been a significant increase in the number of people living alone.
- England's countryside is under threat from a massive increase in (=a very big increase) traffic.
- Profits rose by \$2million. This represents an increase of 13.4 per cent compared to the previous year.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

The usual preposition to use with increase is in. Don't say 'the increase of the earth's temperature'. Say: the increase in the earth's temperature. You use of with numbers, for example: an increase of 15%.

growth noun [singular, uncountable] an increase in the number, size, or importance of something. Growth is also used when saying that a company or a country's economy becomes more successful:

- There has been a huge growth in sales of big 4-wheel-drive vehicles.
- Many people are concerned about the enormous growth in the world's population.
- The astonishing growth of the Internet has had a dramatic effect on people's lives.
- Japan experienced a period of rapid economic growth.

rise noun [countable] an increase in the amount of something, or in the standard or level of something:

- The latest figures show a sharp rise (=a sudden big rise) in unemployment in the region.
- There was a 34 percent rise in the number of armed robberies.
- The majority of families experienced a rise in living standards.
- The instruments showed a dramatic rise (=a surprisingly large increase) in the level of radioactivity. Something was clearly going wrong.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

In American English, a raise is an increase in someone's salary. In British English, this is usually referred to as a pay rise.

build-up noun [countable usually singular] a gradual increase in something harmful, dangerous, or worrying:

- The use of fossil fuels is causing a build-up of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, which contributes to the greenhouse effect.
- She had a build-up of fluid on her knee.
- The crisis led to a big military build-up. (=the size of the army was greatly increased, especially in preparation for war)

surge noun [countable usually singular] a sudden increase in something such as profits, demand, or interest:

- There has been a big surge in demand for organically grown food.
- We have seen a tremendous surge of interest in Chinese medicine.

explosion noun [countable] a sudden very large increase in the amount or number of something:

- The country experienced a population explosion.
- There has been an explosion in the number of fast food restaurants.
- The book caused an explosion of interest in Renaissance Italy.

boom noun [singular] a sudden large increase in trade, profits or sales, with the result that a country, company, or industry becomes very successful. Boom is also used about a sudden increase in interest in something, with the result that it becomes very popular:

- the German economic boom of the 1960s
- the internet boom
- There has been a boom in sales of diet books and videos.

4. WHEN STH DOES NOT INCREASE OR STOPS INCREASING

remain constant/stay the same to continue to be at the same level or rate and not change:

- Her rate of breathing remained constant.
- The deer population has remained constant for many years.
- His weight stayed the same.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Remain constant is more formal than stay the same.

peak/reach a peak verb to stop increasing, after reaching a high level:

- Inflation peaked at 25%.
- The number of cases of the disease reached its peak.

level off/out phrasal verb to stop increasing, and remain at the same level:

- Car sales in Japan levelled off in September after months of continued growth.
- Statistics show that the number of work-related deaths appears to be levelling off at 1.6 per 100,000 employees.

XIX LINKING SENTENCES

1. WORDS MEANING 'AND' AND 'ALSO'

and conjunction used when joining two words or clauses in one sentence, or in one part of a sentence:

- She studied physics and biology at university.
- The information was checked and then rechecked.
- His stay in London was both happy and successful.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Don't use and at the beginning of a sentence

also adverb used when adding another fact about someone or something, or when mentioning another person or thing:

- Smoking causes lung cancer. It has also been linked to heart disease.
- Although most of her books are for adults, she also writes for children.
- The country's mineral resources consist not only of diamonds but also of oil. (=used when you want to emphasize that something else is also important)

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Don't write 'also can'. For example, don't write 'You also can go swimming, walking or cycling.' when you mean: You can also go swimming, walking or cycling.

Don't use also with two negative statements. Use not ... either. For example, don't write 'She does not drink. She also does not smoke.' when you mean: She does not drink. She does not smoke either.

too/as well adverb used when you are adding another fact about someone or something:

- Wind energy is cheap. It is good for the environment too.
- The long hours at work began to affect his health. They affected his personal life as well.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Too and as well are normally used at the end of the sentence. The exception to this is the phrase as well as, which can be used earlier in the sentence, for example: As well as being an artist and designer, Morris was also a political thinker.

- There are sports facilities available for girls as well as boys.

in addition used when adding another piece of information to what you have just said. In addition is often used when saying that something makes an amount even larger:

- A fifth of the world's population lives on less than \$1 a day. In addition, over 100 million children are living on the streets.
- Over 600 people will lose their jobs, in addition to the 400 people who left the company last year.
- In addition to being a major oil producer, Nigeria is home to over 110 million people.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

In addition, furthermore, and moreover are very commonly used in essays.

furthermore/moreover adverb used at the beginning of a sentence when adding an important fact that is connected with what you have just said. Furthermore and moreover are formal words, used especially when trying to persuade people to agree with what you are saying:

- The drug has strong side effects. Furthermore, it can be addictive. (=the writer is adding another fact to persuade the reader that the drug is dangerous)
- There is no evidence to link him with the murder. Moreover, the murder weapon has still not been found. (=the writer is trying to persuade us that the police do not have very much information)
- Ireland's economy has grown far faster than those of its neighbors. Moreover, inflation has stayed low.

not to mention used when adding something at the end of a sentence, which adds to the main idea of what you have just said:

- As he got older, his films became very strange, not to mention violent.

- Big 4-wheel-drive vehicles cause so much environmental damage through pollution, not to mention the danger they pose to pedestrians and cyclists.

2. WORDS MEANING 'BECAUSE'

because conjunction used when giving the reason for something:

- People are leaving the countryside because they cannot find work there.
- The streets were flooded because of all the rain.
- Because of the use of chemical fertilizers, there are fewer fish in our rivers.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

In written English, you don't usually use because at the beginning of a sentence when you are referring back to the previous sentence. It is used to link two parts of the same sentence. For example, instead of writing "Many firms are building factories there. Because wages are much lower." it is much better to write: Many firms are building factories there, because wages are much lower.

due to/owing to preposition used to give the reason why something has happened:

- The delay was due to a problem with the ship's engines.
- Local authorities have been slow to build recycling facilities, mainly owing to lack of money.
- The men did most of the work in the fields. This was partly due to the fact that the men were stronger.
- Due to the danger of fire, people are advised not to drop cigarettes on the ground.

through preposition because of something. Through is used especially when saying why someone succeeded or failed to do something:

- She succeeded through her own efforts.
- They managed to win the game, partly through luck and partly through skill.
- Thousands of working days are lost each year through illness.

thanks to used when explaining that something good has happened because of someone's efforts, or because something exists:

- Today, thanks to the Internet, people can do all their shopping from home.
- Thanks to advances in modern medicine, the disease can now be cured.
- Reinhardt survived the war, mainly thanks to the help of a German officer who loved his music.

since (also as British English) conjunction used when giving the reason why someone decides to do something or decides that something is true:

- As it was a hot day, they decided to leave all the windows open.
- Since it is difficult to predict how the climate will change, it is not possible to say which countries will suffer the most.

in view of a formal phrase used when introducing the reason for someone's decision, or when saying that something is an important thing to consider:

- The court decided that in view of his age, he should be released.
- In view of all the research on the subject, it seems strange that so many people still smoke cigarettes.
- Most British people do not want to change from the pound to the Euro. This may seem surprising in view of the fact that they often use Euros on their holidays.

out of preposition because of a particular feeling or quality:

- He started reading the book out of curiosity.
- She asked the question out of politeness.
- Out of desperation, he tried to borrow money from his neighbour.

3. WORDS MEANING 'BUT' AND 'ALTHOUGH'

but conjunction used when linking two words or phrases that seem opposite or very different in meaning:

- The plant's leaves are big, but its flowers are quite small.
- Her books are fascinating but often rather disturbing.
- Many French dishes are basically simple, but they can take a long time to prepare.
- Most of us value human life, but but some people think of animals as being equally important.

although conjunction used when contrasting one clause with another in the same sentence:

- Although you are in the middle of the city, you feel as if you are in the countryside.
- The windmill is still in good working order, although it has not been used since the 1950s.
- Although lack of sleep causes some problems, it has a relatively small effect on performance at work.

however/nevertheless conjunction used when saying something that seems very different or surprising after your previous statement. However and nevertheless are usually used when referring back to the previous sentence:

- Their economy was incredibly successful in the 1980s. Since then, however, there has been a big rise in unemployment.
- The town is a long way from the nearest big city. However, there is a good bus service.
- A series of studies 20 years ago suggested that there was a link between watching violent films and violent behaviour. Nevertheless, the results remain highly controversial.
- It was very hard digging in the dry ground, but the work was satisfying nevertheless.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

However is usually used in the middle of a sentence, separated from the rest of the sentence by commas:: Jack and his family managed to escape before the soldiers arrived. Other families in the village, however, were less lucky. Or it comes at the beginning of a sentence: He began his academic career as a mathematician. However, his main achievements were in the field of nuclear physics. Nevertheless is usually used at the beginning of a sentence, or at the end.

whereas/while conjunction used when making comparisons and saying that something is true of one person, thing, or situation, but it is different for another. Whereas and while are used when contrasting one clause with another in the same sentence:

- Taxes make up 62% of the price of a litre of petrol in France, whereas in Britain, the tax is 75%.

- Some people visit their doctor once every few weeks, while others may not visit a doctor for several years.
- Whereas in most of the world they drive on the right, in the UK and Japan they drive on the left.

by contrast used when making comparisons and saying that a person, thing, or situation is very different from the one you have just mentioned. By contrast is used when referring back to the previous sentence:

- The surface temperature on Venus is higher than the boiling point of water. Mars, by contrast, is very cold
- A report by the FBI shows that 26% of female murder victims in 1995 were killed by their husbands or boyfriends. By contrast, only 3% of male victims were killed by their wives or girlfriends.

yet conjunction used when introducing a fact that seems surprising after what you have just said:

- Last summer there was a drought, yet some people were still watering their gardens every day.
- We all know that fibre is important for good health. And yet all the natural fibre is removed from many foods such as white bread and sugar.

even so used when saying that something is true, in spite of a fact that you have just mentioned:

- Morris's furniture is distinctly English. Even so, the sale drew a lot of American interest.
- The economy continues to do well, but even so, many analysts are predicting a slowdown in the near future.

in spite of/despite preposition even though something happens or is true:

- This was a dinosaur that weighed only 10 tons, in spite of being some 28 metres long.
- In spite of everything that has happened, life is still getting better for many Russians.
- Despite his lack of formal education, he became one of the world's leading mathematicians.
- Many people are worried that cellphones may be dangerous to health, despite the fact that most of the research suggests that there is little risk.

4. WORDS MEANING 'IF'

if conjunction used when talking about the possibility that something might happen or be true:

- If the scientists' predictions are correct, average global temperatures could rise by 6 degrees.
- He faced a long prison sentence if the court found him guilty.
- The report said that the accident could have been avoided if the correct safety procedures had been followed.
- Most countries are prepared to use force, if necessary, to protect their national interests.
- The patient should be kept in the same position, if possible.

- The injury needed to be treated immediately. If not, infection could set in.
- The British authorities could not help, even if they wanted to.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

When using if to talk about the future, you normally use the simple present tense. For example, don't say 'If it will rain, the game will be canceled', when you mean: If it rains, the game will be canceled.

unless conjunction if something does not happen, or if someone does not do something:

- Unless something is done quickly, developing countries will fall even further behind Western countries.
- The star is really difficult to see unless the sky is dark and very clear.
- The doctors said they could not treat the boy unless and until his parents gave their permission.

whether or not used when saying that it does not matter if something happens or not, or if something is true or not:

- Research showed that six out of 10 patients got better on their own, whether or not they received treatment.
- Whether or not you agree with what she is saying, her articles are always interesting and thought-provoking.

otherwise adverb used when saying that there will be a bad result if someone does not do something, or if something does not happen:

- The committee needs to act quickly, otherwise there could be a serious problem.
- The local people are certainly glad that the tourists are there. Otherwise there would be no money and no jobs.

in case in order to deal with something that might happen:

- Doctors have to take out insurance to protect themselves in case they are sued.
- It is best to keep a medical kit ready in case of emergency.
- She did not think it would rain, but she took her umbrella just in case.

assuming that if what you think will happen is true:

- Assuming that the present trend continues, the world population is likely to rise to over 8 billion.
- This sort of floor covering can be laid directly onto concrete floors, assuming that they are level.

as long as/provided that conjunction only if something else happens or is true:

- Vegetarian diets are perfectly healthy, provided that you take care to get enough iron, calcium and B vitamins.
- As long as the economy continues to grow, people will continue to support the government.

on condition that used when you agree to do something only if someone first agrees to do something else:

- He was offered the job on condition that he went on a month-long training course.
- The painting was sold on condition that it never left France.

in the event of/that if something happens, especially a serious situation such as an accident, a fire, or a war:

- Guidelines have been issued to local authorities on what to do in the event of a nuclear accident.
- In the event of an earthquake, people are advised to take cover under desks or doorways.
- In the event that the party lost the election, his future as party leader would be in doubt.

5. WORDS MEANING 'IN ORDER TO'

in order to for the purpose of doing something:

- Some people steal in order to buy drugs.
- In order to prove his theory, he carried out a series of experiments.
- Plants need light in order to survive.
- The speech was changed in order not to offend anyone.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

in order to is used especially in formal contexts. In all other contexts people often just write to, for example: The organization was set up originally to protect the rights of children.

- To make sure that the job was done properly, Mr Lobov appointed three new deputy ministers.

so (that) conjunction used when saying why someone does something or what the result of something is:

- Workers need to learn new skills so that they can keep up with the latest advances in technology.
- Doctors use miniature cameras so that they can see inside the patients' stomachs.
- The windows are designed so that you can see out, but other people cannot see in.

for preposition for a particular reason or purpose:

- She went into hospital for a checkup.
- Some people give up eating meat for health reasons, while others give up because they are concerned about animal welfare.
- The land is used for agricultural purposes.

with the aim of doing something in order to try and achieve something:

- The dam was built with the aim of providing drinking water to thousands of people.
- Talks were held in Paris with the aim of helping the two sides reach an agreement.

with a view to doing something because you are planning to do something later in the future, and this will help you to do it:

- They wanted to establish closer links with Germany, with a view to becoming members of the European Union.
- Rice and potatoes were genetically modified, with a view to commercial planting.

6. WORDS MEANING 'OR'

or conjunction used between two possibilities or choices, or before the last one in a list of possibilities or choices:

- It is important not to get the chemicals on your hands or your clothes.
- Payment can be made by cash, cheque or credit card.
- There is very little difference between the two species of bird, either in size or colour.

alternatively adverb used when giving another choice apart from the one you have already mentioned:

- You can go up into the mountains. Alternatively, you can stroll around one of Switzerland's delightful cities where the old mixes with the new.
- For a master's degree, 12 months' full-time study is normally required, or alternatively 24 months of part-time study.

on the one hand ... on the other (hand) used when giving two very different ideas or opinions about something, especially when they need to be balanced against each other:

- On the one hand, the internet gives students access to information on every imaginable topic. On the other, there is a lot of material on the internet that is very unsuitable for students.
- On the one hand, it is important not to limit individual freedom too much, but on the other hand, people have the right to be able to live their lives in peace.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Don't say 'on one hand'. Say on the one hand.

7. WORDS MEANING 'THEREFORE'

therefore adverb used when saying that something happens or someone does something as a result of something else:

- She already had a lot of experience and therefore seemed the best candidate for the job.
- Many old people have some form of disability or health problem. It is not surprising, therefore, that they are the biggest users of the health care system.
- The Japanese writing system has thousands of characters. Therefore it takes a long time to learn.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Therefore is more formal than so.

You can use therefore in the middle of a sentence, or at the beginning of a sentence. You use so in the middle of a sentence, usually after a comma.

so conjunction used when saying that something happens or someone does something as a result of something else:

- They had not eaten all day, so they were very hungry.
- Questions have been raised over the safety of the toys, and so they are being withdrawn from the market.

thus adverb a formal word, meaning as a result of what you have just mentioned:

- The dinosaurs all died out within a short period of time. Thus it seems likely that there must have been some kind of catastrophic event.

- The program is very simple and thus easy to run.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Thus is more formal than therefore, and is used especially in formal writing.

hence adverb a formal word, meaning for this reason:

- This material is highly poisonous, hence the importance of careful handling.
- Their names sound very similar. Hence they are often confused with each other.

as a result use this to say that because of a particular situation, something else happens or is true:

- Some people suffer from stress at work and become ill as a result.
- The farmer could not pump water onto his field and, as a result, he had grown only twenty tons of melons compared to eighty before the war.
- Economic growth slowed down as a result of inflation.
- As a result of her injuries, she was forced to abandon her hopes of going to medical school.

consequently/as a consequence adverb use this to say that because of a particular situation, something else happens or is true:

- The disease attacks the plant, the flower does not open, and consequently no seeds are produced.
- More people are using their cars, and as a consequence many rural bus services have been severely reduced.
- As a consequence of global warming, our climate is already starting to change.
- Lead remains forever in the atmosphere. Consequently, this year's lead pollution will add to that of all previous years.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Consequently and as a consequence are more formal than as a result.

for this reason/for these reasons used when explaining the reason for something:

- She was not very good at ball games. For this reason she did not care much for sport or physical activities.
- If you live in a big city, housing is very expensive and there is so much pollution. For these and other reasons, more and more people are choosing to move out to the country.

with the result that use this to say that because of a particular situation, another situation exists or happens:

- Both laboratories were completely re-equipped last year, with the result that we now have the most modern facilities in the country.
- Taxes were increased, with the result that people had to work harder if they wanted to maintain their standard of living.

this means that used when saying what the result of something is:

- Childcare is very expensive. This means that many women cannot afford to go back to work after having children.
- If students arrive late, this can mean that a large part of the lesson time is wasted.

thereby adverb a formal word, used when saying what the result of something is. You use thereby in the middle of a sentence, usually after a comma:

- The two companies were merged, thereby creating a single company.
- If our homes are properly insulated, we need to use less oil or gas, thereby cutting the cost of heating them.

accordingly adverb a formal word, meaning as a result of what you have just said:

- Too much alcohol can be harmful to health. Accordingly, on this diet you are allowed only one or two units of alcohol per day.
- He had disobeyed an order from a senior officer, and accordingly he was dismissed from the army.

XX LISTING AND ORDERING

1. ORDERING THINGS YOU WANT TO MENTION

firstly/first adverb used when mentioning the first in a list of reasons, arguments, or parts of an essay:

- There are two main reasons why people choose this type of investment. Firstly, it is relatively safe. Secondly, it offers a good rate of interest.
- The statistics show, firstly, that crime is increasing; secondly, that most crime is committed by young men; and lastly, that many of these young men are on drugs.
- This essay seeks to answer the following questions. First, is our current political system truly democratic? Second, what are the alternatives?

first of all used especially when the first thing that you mention is the most important thing:

- The content of the article must, first of all, be useful to the reader.
- People are living longer for several reasons. First of all, there have been enormous advances in medical science. Secondly, our diets are now much healthier.

secondly/second adverb used when mentioning the second in a list of reasons, arguments, or parts of an essay:

- Many people are concerned about the problems associated with nuclear energy. Firstly, what do you do with all the nuclear waste? Secondly, how can we prevent nuclear materials from falling into the hands of terrorists?

thirdly/third adverb used when mentioning the third in a list of reasons, arguments, or parts of an essay:

- There are many things we can do to help protect our environment. First of all, we can use our cars less. Secondly, we can recycle more. Thirdly, we need to develop new sources of energy which cause less pollution.

in the first/second/third place means the same as firstly, secondly or thirdly, but is less formal. It is used especially when giving reasons or examples:

- Modern communications have completely changed the way we work. In the first place, they have made it possible for many people to work from home. They also allow people in different parts of the world to communicate instantly at any time of day.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

When you are giving a long list of reasons or parts in an essay, it sounds rather repetitive to say Firstly... Secondly... Thirdly ... Fourthly... Fifthly etc. It sounds much more natural to vary the language and use other phrases instead of numbers, for example In addition ... Furthermore/moreover ... Lastly ...

Here is an example of this kind of ordering: There are many reasons for switching to wind power. Firstly, it causes much less damage to the environment than fossil fuels such as oil and coal. In addition, wind power comes from a renewable energy source, and there will always be more wind available. Furthermore, wind turbines and windmills are much more graceful and attractive to look at than power stations. Last but not least, they are very cheap to run.

then/next adverb used when saying what happens next in a process:

- First, we added the salt to the water, then we boiled the mixture for five minutes.
- Take the fish and gently rub oil over it. Next, place it in a medium hot oven for 15 minutes.
- When you receive the equipment, you need to check that all the parts are there. Then you need to connect it to the electricity supply.

in addition as well as what you have already mentioned:

- Fast foods and snacks have been linked to obesity. In addition, studies have shown that these foods can cause behavioural problems in young children.

furthermore/moreover adverb as well as what you have already mentioned. These are formal words which are used especially when suggesting that what you are saying is just as important or even more important than what you have already said:

- In order to keep the price of the book down, we have used fewer photographs than we wanted to. Furthermore, the book has no colour, which means that we have been limited to black and white images.
- Older workers often have a great deal of experience to offer. Moreover, they are extremely reliable and less likely to change jobs.

lastly adverb used when something is the last of the things that you want to mention:

- The island has become very popular, firstly for its beautiful beaches, secondly because of its friendly atmosphere, and lastly because it is so easy to get to from the UK.
- There are many reasons why prison doesn't work. First of all, prisons often act as training colleges for criminals. Secondly, prison does not deal with the reasons why young men commit crime. Lastly, it costs huge amounts of money to keep people in prison.

finally adverb used when something is the last thing that you want to say, especially at the end of a long essay, report etc. You also use finally when giving the last reason, example etc in a long list:

- Finally, I would like to suggest some possible solutions to the problem.

one last/final point used when you want to add one last thing to what you have already said, for example at the end of the final paragraph of your essay:

- One final point to remember is that although regular exercise is usually good for health, too much exercise can actually cause permanent damage to muscles and joints.

2. ways of introducing a list of reasons, causes, points etc

there are several/there are a number of ... used when you are going to list several reasons, causes, points etc:

- There are several points to keep in mind when writing business letters: try to be brief, always be polite, and make sure that you use the correct job title.
- Women are more likely to suffer from depression than men. There are a number of reasons for this.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

When you are introducing a list, you can either use a colon (:) before the list, or a full stop (.).

as follows used when introducing a list or an explanation:

- The objectives of the study are as follows: firstly to find out whether there was a demand for this type of service, and secondly to establish how much people were willing to pay for it.
- The facts are as follows. Kennedy was shot by a lone gunman named Lee Harvey Oswald. While Oswald was being held in custody, he was shot by Jack Ruby.

the following adjective, noun [singular] used when referring to the things or people that you are going to mention:

- The following foods are high in fat: butter, cream, cheese, pastry, and any kind of fried food.
- The following is a brief summary of the main sources of grants for postgraduate students.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Following can be used as an adjective, for example: the following example, or as a noun, for example: Benefits include the following.

XX MAKING GENERALIZATIONS

1. STH IS TRUE ABOUT MOST PEOPLE OR THINGS

most determiner, pron used when saying that something is true about the majority of people or things in a group, or about the majority of something:

- Most people would agree that the law needs changing.
- In most cases the patient makes a full recovery. (=most patients recover completely)
- Most of (=most people or things in a group) the class are women.
- Most of the research supports this point of view.
- The students speak English most of the time when they are at school.

mostly/mainly/largely adverb used when saying that something is true about most of a group of people or things, or about most of something:

- The people who use the service are mostly businessmen.
- The cars are mostly for export.

- Apart from the Nile valley, Egypt is mostly desert.
- The audience were mainly young people in their teens.
- The disease mainly affects women.
- Their attempts were largely unsuccessful.
- Half of the country's people faced starvation, largely as a result of the civil war.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Largely sounds more formal than mostly or mainly, and is used especially in written English.

predominantly adverb used when saying that most people or things in a group are of a particular type:

- Engineering has traditionally been a predominantly male profession. (=most engineers are men)
- At that time England was a predominantly agricultural society.
- The condition predominantly affects middle-aged women.

almost all/nearly all/virtually all adverb used when you want to emphasize that there are very few exceptions:

- Unemployment rates went up in almost all European countries.
- The study found that in almost all cases people were satisfied with the service they received.
- The country has to import almost all of its oil.
- Nearly all the children interviewed said that they are worried about what will happen in the future.
- Magnesium is found in virtually all foods.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Don't say 'the most people/things', when you mean 'most people/things'. For example, don't say 'The most people live in towns', when you mean: Most people live in towns.

the majority noun [singular] more than half of a group of the people or things in a large group:

- The majority of crimes are never reported to the police.
- The vast majority of Algerians are Muslim. (=almost all Algerians are Muslim)

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

The majority of is usually followed by a countable noun in the plural, but sometimes it can be followed by an uncountable noun which refers to a group of things or people: Can the president order a military operation in another country if the majority of the legislature opposes the action?

in general used when saying that something is true about most of a group of people or things:

- Men, in general, are just as good at looking after children as women.
- In general, teenagers from poor families are less likely to go to university.
- In general, smaller firms are more flexible.

generally adverb used when saying that something is true about most of a group of people or things. Generally is also used when saying that most people have a particular opinion:

- Generally, part-time workers receive lower wages than full-time workers.

- People generally are living longer.
- Newton is generally regarded as the father of modern science.
- It is now generally accepted that even the smallest dose of radiation carries a health risk.

generally speaking/broadly speaking/as a rule used when making general statements about what usually happens or is usually true:

- Generally speaking, female workers are less likely to strike.
- People in the US are, generally speaking, not very well informed about international politics.
- As a rule, snakes have simple teeth, all roughly the same shape.
- The surface of Mercury, broadly speaking, can be divided into two types of land area.

for the most part used when saying that something is true in most cases, but not in every case:

- These problems have, for the most part, been resolved.
- For the most part, local people welcomed the plan.

by and large/in the main/on the whole used when saying that something is true in most ways, or in most cases:

- The scheme was by and large a success.
- On the whole, the system worked well.
- The people on the whole were very friendly.
- The pictures are, in the main, portraits.

generalize verb [intransitive] to make a general statement, in which you say that something is true about most people or things:

- It is clearly a mistake to generalize from only a few examples.
- It is difficult to generalize about the American police, because there are over 40,000 police departments in the US.

generalization noun [countable] a statement in which you say that something is true about most people or things:

- Social scientists try to make generalizations about society, based on the best available evidence.
- A lot of misleading generalizations have been made about the differences between men and women.
- English people love animals. As a broad generalization, there is much truth in this statement. (=a generalization which has many exceptions, but which gives you a general idea about a group of people or things)
- When people say things like "the theatre is for everyone", this seems rather a sweeping generalization. (=a statement that seems exaggerated and likely to be wrong)

XXII PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

1. PROBLEMS

problem noun [countable] a situation that must be dealt with because it is causing harm or inconvenience, or because it is stopping you from doing what you want to do:

- Britain faced enormous economic and social problems after the war.
- Classroom discipline is a serious problem in many schools.
- A special force was set up to try to deal with the problem of gun crime.
- The sooner this problem is solved (=successfully dealt with), the better.
- The US government needs to do more to help tackle the problem (=deal with the problem) of global warming.
- It is in everyone's interest to address the problem (=find ways of solving the problem) of global poverty.
- The engineers say that they have fixed all the technical problems that could have caused the accident.
- Professor Murray believes that the root of the problem lies (=the origin of the problem is) in a basic fault in the car's design.
- Problems can arise (=problems can happen) when people try to defend themselves in court without help from a lawyer.

issue noun [countable] a problem that needs to be dealt with, or a subject that is important and needs to be discussed:

- International terrorism is the biggest issue (=the most important issue) facing the world today.
- Security is an important issue when buying things on the internet.
- Previous governments failed to address (=try to deal with) social issues such as unemployment and homelessness.
- The issue can only be resolved (=be successfully dealt with) through negotiation between the two sides.
- Nuclear power is a highly controversial issue (=one that causes a lot of public argument and disagreement) in the UK.
- Immigration could be a key issue (=a very important issue) at the next election.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Issue is used especially about problems that affect a lot of people in society. It is also often used instead of the word problem because it sounds less negative.

challenge noun [countable] something difficult that you must do or deal with, which needs a lot of skill, effort, and determination:

- Understanding the brain is one of the biggest challenges in science.
- She said she was looking forward to the challenge of starting up a new business on her own.
- The Colombian government knows that it faces huge challenges if it is to win the war on drugs.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Challenge is used especially when talking about something that sounds exciting and interesting, because it will take a lot of effort and skill.

difficulty noun [countable usually plural, uncountable] a problem that makes it more difficult to do something that you are trying to do:

- The company has managed to overcome (=deal with) its recent financial difficulties.
- Many people experience difficulty in sleeping at some time in their lives.

- The project ran into difficulty (=started to have difficulties) because of lack of money.
- This type of research is fraught with difficulty (=involves a lot of difficulties).

trouble noun [uncountable and countable] a problem or several problems that make something difficult, spoil your plans etc:

- The trouble was caused by a loose wire.
- They had trouble finding the building where the meeting was held.
- Students of English often have trouble with phrasal verbs.
- The company ran into trouble (=started to have problems) when it tried to expand too quickly.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Trouble can be used either as an uncountable noun, for example: They had a great deal of trouble with the new computer system or as a countable noun, for example: Teenagers often find it difficult to tell their parents about their troubles. (=about the problems in their lives that are making them worried and unhappy)

complication noun [countable] an additional problem that makes a bad or difficult situation even harder to deal with than it already is:

- The project should finish in June, provided that there are no more complications.
- The surgeons knew it would be a difficult operation. A further complication (=another complication) was that the patient was in her 60s.

setback noun [countable] something that happens which stops you making progress or which makes things worse than they were before:

- The peace talks suffered a major setback when a bomb exploded outside the conference hotel.
- Despite some early setbacks, his campaign for the presidency was successful.

obstacle noun [countable] a difficult problem that stops someone or something making progress or developing:

- Criminal gangs are the biggest obstacle to democratic reform.
- The lack of child care is an enormous obstacle to women's participation in the work force.
- There are still some major technical obstacles to overcome (=to deal with).

pitfall noun [countable] a problem that is likely to happen when you are doing something, especially one that is caused by a mistake that people often make:

- The book shows you how to avoid the usual pitfalls when you are at an interview.
- The most common pitfall when treating the disease is to give too much treatment too late.
- Financial advisers should explain to customers the potential pitfalls (=the problems that could happen) of investing in risky small company stocks.

dilemma noun [countable] a situation in which it is very difficult to decide what to do, because all the choices seem equally good or equally bad:

- The doctors were faced with a moral dilemma. Should they carry out the operation, when there was such a small chance of success?

- Kennedy found himself in a dilemma over Cuba. On the one hand he did not want to risk a nuclear war, but on the other he could not allow the Russians to place nuclear weapons so close to American soil.

vicious circle noun [singular] a situation in which one problem causes another problem, that then causes the first problem again, so that the whole process continues to be repeated:

- Some developing countries get caught in a vicious circle. They cannot afford to pay their debt repayments, and so the debts get even bigger.
- Stress at work can create a vicious circle. If you feel stressed and under pressure, you take longer to do your job, and because you take longer you become more stressed.

2. SMALL PROBLEMS

teething problems/troubles noun [plural] small problems which happen when you start using or doing something new:

- With any computer system, there are likely to be one or two teething problems at first.
- There have been some teething troubles with the new rail service.

hitch noun [countable] a small problem when you are trying to do something:

- Everything went well on the first night of the play except for one or two slight hitches with the lighting.
- The plan went off without a hitch. (=There were no problems)

snag noun [countable] a small problem or disadvantage, especially in something which is mainly good and satisfactory:

- The only snag with going on holiday in Sweden is the cost.
- There are one or two little snags that needed to be ironed out. (=dealt with)
- Almost immediately after they began their research, they hit a series of snags. (=they had to deal with a number of small problems)

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Hitch and snag are informal words, and should not be used in formal essays.

3. SOLUTIONS

solution noun [countable] a way of dealing with a problem:

- Politicians have been trying to find a solution to the housing crisis for many years now.
- In this essay I shall consider the main causes of the problem of air pollution, and try to put forward (=suggest) some possible solutions.
- Unless scientists can come up with a solution (=think of a solution) quickly, we may soon run out of sources of energy.
- When people become too old to look after themselves, the ideal solution is for other members of their family to look after them.
- If you have difficulty sleeping, you need to identify the factors that are causing it and deal with them. That is the only effective long-term solution.
- There was no easy solution to Tom's problem. (=there was no easy way of dealing with it)

answer noun [countable] a successful way of dealing with a problem or an unsatisfactory situation:

- Some people believe that the only answer to the problem of rising crime is to build more prisons.
- It would be mistaken to think that science and technology can always provide an answer to everything.
- There are no easy answers to the problem of teenage pregnancies.
- People have been struggling with this problem for a long time, but no one has yet come up with an answer. (=thought of an answer)

way out noun [countable] a way of dealing with a very serious situation which you have become involved in:

- The president's advisors are trying to find a way out of the crisis.
- At first there seemed to be no way out of her difficulties.

cure noun [countable] a way of completely getting rid of a problem, especially one that affects many people in society, so that it does not happen again:

- The only cure for unemployment is to make it easier for companies to invest and create new jobs.
- Unfortunately, there is no miracle cure for inflation. (=there is nothing that will immediately make the situation better)
- Prison is not a cure for all social ills. (=a cure for all social problems)

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Cure, remedy, prescription, and panacea are used metaphorically to talk about dealing with problems. Their original meanings relate to treating illnesses.

remedy noun [countable] a possible way of dealing with a problem, especially using practical methods:

- Expensive hi-tech remedies are often useless to poor countries.
- A number of remedies have been suggested, but so far none of them has shown itself to be effective.

prescription noun [countable] something that someone suggests as a way of dealing with a problem:

- Their prescription for dealing with poverty in Africa is to encourage more trade, instead of increasing aid.
- The socialists' main prescription for any social problem seems to be to pump more and more money into the system.

panacea noun [countable] a formal word, meaning something that people hope will solve all their problems. You use panacea when you doubt that something can really do this:

- The law is not a universal panacea. (=it cannot solve all our problems)
- Some people think that free market capitalism is a panacea for all our ills. (=something that will solve all our problems)
- Furthermore, industrialization has rarely been the panacea for rural poverty that had been hoped.

quick fix noun [countable] a quick way of dealing with a problem, which usually only works for a short time. You use quick fix especially when you think that people need to find a more permanent solution:

- There is no quick fix to defeat terrorism.
- A leading scientist has warned that quick fix schemes to deal with global warming could potentially be more damaging than the problem itself.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Quick fix is an informal phrase, and should not be used in formal essays.

magic bullet noun [countable] something that solves a difficult problem quickly and simply. You use magic bullet especially when saying that it will be difficult to find such a solution:

- There is no magic bullet for dealing with inflation.
- Although a magic bullet for curing cancer is still not likely any time soon, researchers are making slow and steady progress.

XXIII QUOTING PEOPLE

say verb [transitive] used when quoting what someone said in a speech, or wrote in a book, article etc:

- John F. Kennedy once famously said "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country."
- In their report, they say that they see no reason to change the existing system.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Say is used a lot in English. Below are other words and expressions which mean the same thing, and when writing essays it is a good idea to use some of these instead of repeating say every time.

write verb [transitive] used when quoting what someone wrote in a book, article etc:

- Du Bois wrote that the United States was "a land of magnificent possibilities - the home of noble souls and generous people."

point out phrasal verb to mention something in a book, article etc, which seems particularly important and relevant:

- Dr Graham points out that "All normal children show some degree of antisocial behaviour".
- As Rachel Carson points out in her book "Silent Spring", chemicals used in farming are having a devastating effect on our countryside.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

You use As ... points out/notes/states etc to show that you agree with what the writer has said.

note/remark verb [transitive] to say that you have noticed that something is true. Note and remark are formal words:

- Lyons (1977) notes that not all languages have tenses.
- As Brownmiller has remarked, women, on the whole, have not achieved economic equality with men in our society.

observe verb [transitive] to say that you have noticed that something is true. Observe is used when reporting someone's scientific studies, or when saying that someone points out a truth about life or the world:

- Winnicott observed that mothers spend much of the first few months imitating their infants.
- As Joseph Heller once observed, success and failure can be equally difficult to deal with.

state verb [transitive] used when saying what people, reports, laws and rules say. State sounds very definite and full of authority:

- Parkinson's Law states that "work expands to fill the time available".
- As Skinner (1948) states, verbal behaviour develops according to the same principles as any other behaviour.

argue verb [transitive] used when you want to say that someone puts forward a set of ideas:

- Rousseau argued that all men were born equal.
- As Edward Said argues: European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient (Said 1995).

conclude verb [transitive] used when you are introducing the end of what someone has written, especially when it is a summary of the main point of what they wrote:

- Wagner concludes that managers should constantly try to lower costs and achieve high product quality.

claim verb [transitive] you use claim when you are saying what someone has said, and you do not believe that what they said was true or you think there is no proof for what they said:

- Some people have claimed that Kennedy was killed by the CIA.
- Doctors claimed to have found a cure for the disease.

according to ... preposition used when saying what people, organizations, and reports have said:

- According to a recent survey by Time magazine, 49 percent of Americans said they thought the President was doing a good job.
- Young children need at least ten hours of sleep a day, according to Dr. Shaefer.

in the words of ... used when saying exactly what someone has said, especially when this seems to sum up a situation very well:

- In the words of one professor, the object of teaching English literature is not to pass on knowledge, but to train the imagination.

XXIV REFERRING

1. ...TO AN EARLIER PART OF THE ESSAY OR REPORT

above adjective, adverb used when referring to something in an earlier part of the essay, report etc that you are writing, usually something that is nearby and on the same page:

- See the above diagram.
- Students often have difficulty with verbs of motion, as the above example shows.
- This procedure is described above.
- For more information, see above.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Above can be used as an adjective, for example: the above picture, or as an adverb, for example: see above.

previous adjective [only before noun] a previous part of an essay, report etc comes before this one:

- The results of this study were discussed in a previous section. (=one of the sections before this one)
- As was mentioned in the previous chapter, (=the chapter immediately before this one) these changes occurred over a long period of time.

preceding adjective [only before noun] the preceding part of an essay, report etc comes immediately before this one:

- In the preceding pages, she describes the history of the island.
- These meetings were mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

earlier adverb at some point before this in an essay, report etc:

- It is extremely important, therefore, to follow the general principles on project planning that we described earlier in the chapter.
- As was mentioned earlier, at that time most people could not expect to live beyond the age of 65.
- As outlined earlier, an alternative theory was becoming widely accepted in the 1920s.

as has been seen/it has been seen that used when referring to something that you have already mentioned or shown:

- Matisse, as has been seen, was inspired by the work of Cezanne.
- It has been seen that there are a number of problems with this type of approach.

the former adj n [singular] a formal phrase meaning the first of the two things or people that you have just mentioned:

- The former method is probably more likely to produce a successful result.
- There were two possible ways of dealing with the situation: try to negotiate with the terrorists, or launch an immediate attack. The government chose the former.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Former can be used as an adjective, for example: the former approach, or as a noun, for example: The corporation chose the former.

the latter adj n [singular] a formal phrase meaning the second of the two things or people that you have just mentioned:

- Some people think the killing was deliberate. Others say that it was an accident. I would take the latter view.
- The people are either Albanians or Serbs. The latter regard Kosovo as a sacred part of historic Serbia.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Latter can be used as an adjective, for example: the latter view, or as a noun, for example: Wilson preferred the latter.

2. ... TO A LATER PART OF THE ESSAY OR REPORT

below adverb used when referring to a later part of the essay, report etc that you are writing, usually nearby on the same page:

- See below for further details.
- The reasons that lay behind this decision are discussed below.
- Below is a short account of the events that led up to the crisis.

the following adj n [singular] used when referring to the things or people that you are going to mention:

- Consider the following example.
- It is important to remember the following points.
- Make sure that the patient has the following: drugs, dressings, X rays, and a completed appointment card.
- The following are some of the things that people said about the book.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

The following can be used as an adjective, for example: the following method, or as a noun, for example: Choose one of the following.

When it introduces a list that comes immediately after it, the following has a colon after it: Your report should discuss the following: initial hypothesis; the experiment; analysis of the results.

as follows used when introducing a list or an explanation:

- The three elements are as follows: economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

there follows used when giving a short description of what comes next in an essay, report etc:

- There follows a simple example of this kind of organization of ideas and information.

over page/overleaf adverb on the next page. Used when telling people to look at the next page for more information about something:

- This sound is produced with the tongue behind the top teeth (see diagram over page).
- More than 8,400 new airliners will be sold over the next 15 years, worth more than \$500 billion (see chart overleaf).

see over used when asking people to look at the next page for more information about something:

- For more information, see over.
- Einstein was awarded the Nobel prize for his work on the Quantum Theory (see over).

as we shall see used when saying that something will be explained or become clear later in a piece of writing:

- As we shall see later, their views differ in several important respects.
- This idea is probably wrong, as we shall see.

3. ...TO ANOTHER PIECE OF WORK

see verb [transitive] used when referring to another writer's work:

- For a more extensive discussion, see Eysenck (1979).
- See Townsend (1971, pp. 120–9) for an interesting analysis of this topic.

as somebody says/notes/remarks/points out etc used when you are quoting another writer, when you agree with what they said:

- As Professor Richard Dawkins points out, this process is influenced by environmental factors.
- It is important to remember, as Alan Kay says, "the main difference between scientists and engineers is that engineers want to make things and scientists want to understand them."

cf. used when referring to something, for example a particular writer's work, that is connected with the subject that you are writing about:

- Often a male speaker will use a more formal style when addressing a woman (cf. Trudgill 1986).
- Very few linguists have produced analyses that make use of such functional categories (but cf. Halliday, 1973).

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Cf. is the abbreviation of the Latin word confer, which means 'compare'.

op. cit. used in formal writing when you are referring to a book, article etc that you have already mentioned:

- There has been much discussion concerning the origins of primitive art (see also Gombrich, op. cit., p63-94)

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Op. cit. is the abbreviation of the Latin words opere citato, which mean 'in the work that I have quoted'.

ibid. adverb used in formal writing when you are referring to the same book, article etc as the one that you have just mentioned:

- Half of these countries have incomes between \$1,000 and \$3,000 (ibid: p63).

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Ibid. comes from the Latin word ibidem, which means 'in the same place'.

loc. cit. used in formal writing when you are referring to the same page in a book, article etc as the one that you have just mentioned:

- According to Dionysius (loc. cit.) the statue had disappeared, and was supposed to have been burned.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

loc. cit. is an abbreviation of the Latin words loco citato, which mean 'in the same place I have quoted'.

pp. the written abbreviation of pages, used when you are referring to several pages in another writer's book, article etc:

- See also Wadsworth 1978, pp. 54-55

XXV RELATED / UNRELATED

1. TWO THINGS ARE RELATED

related/connected adjective if two things are related or connected, there is some kind of connection between them:

- These two problems are closely related to each other.
- Some people think that the stones are connected in some way with religious ceremonies.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

You can use related before a noun, for example: The report deals with homelessness and other related issues. But you do not normally use connected before a noun in this way.

You can also say that two things are not unrelated (=they are related), for example: Much of modern philosophy is not unrelated to the ideas of the ancient Greeks.

linked adjective if two things are linked, there is a direct connection between them, and often one of them is the cause of the other:

- High levels of cholesterol are linked with an increased risk of heart disease.
- Individual performance is linked to the amount of effort that you put in.
- Two closely linked factors produced this result.
- Our minds and our bodies are inextricably linked. (=they are so closely linked that they cannot be considered separately)

(there is a) connection/link if there is a connection or link between two things, they are directly connected, and often one of them is the cause of the other:

- All the data we have suggests that there is a direct connection between the use of fossil fuels and the rise in global temperatures.
- Studies in the 1960s showed that there was a link between smoking and lung cancer.

(there is a) correlation if there is a correlation between two things, they are connected and one may cause the other:

- Karimov claims to have discovered a direct correlation between nuclear tests in the area and earthquakes throughout the former Soviet Union.
- It is well known that there is a strong correlation between obesity and some forms of cancer.
- Numerous studies have shown a consistent negative correlation between age and participation in sporting activities. (=older people are less likely to do sport) | There is a significant positive correlation between alcohol consumption and the incidence of the disease. (=people who drink a lot of alcohol are more likely to get the disease)

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Correlation is used especially in statements that are based on scientific studies and statistics

interrelated/interconnected adjective if things are interrelated or interconnected, they are connected with each other and affect each other in a complicated series of ways:

- Darwin said that all life on earth is interrelated.
- The book consists of a series of interconnected essays.

interdependent adjective if two things are interdependent, each of them depends on the other, and they cannot exist or continue independently:

- The parts of any living organism are interdependent.
- The economies of town and countryside were closely interdependent.

associated adjective if something is associated with another thing, it is thought to have a connection with it:

- Researchers discovered a gene associated with some forms of skin cancer.
- Salaries and associated costs have risen significantly over the past year.

be bound up with if two things are bound up with each other, they are very closely connected and need to be considered together:

- Your sense of yourself as a person is closely bound up with what happens in your early childhood.
- The mill's history is inextricably bound up with that of the Wilkins family (=they are so closely linked that they cannot be considered separately)

go together phrasal verb if two things go together, you usually find one with the other:

- Ignorance and distrust go together.
- Inflation and high unemployment usually go together.

2. RELATED TO WHAT IS BEING DISCUSSED

relevant adjective related to what is being discussed or to a particular area of activity:

- His work is particularly relevant to this discussion.
- The tribunal will look at all the relevant facts before making up its mind.
- Applicants should be educated to PhD level, and have several years' relevant experience.

pertinent adjective a formal word. If something is pertinent to what is being discussed, it is directly concerned with it and it is important to consider it:

- The report was first published in the late 1980s, but its findings are still pertinent to today's situation.
- This raises a pertinent question. Why should we give politicians all this power?

germane adjective a formal word. Something that is germane is directly concerned with what is being discussed:

- The chapters which are germane to the topic are chapters 11 and 12.
- These questions are especially germane in nuclear physics, where researchers are constantly looking for better methods of analysis.

have a bearing on if something has a bearing on a situation, it is likely to have a big effect on it and it is important to consider it:

- At first it was difficult to see how this discovery had any bearing on the problem.
- Advances in genetics are likely to have a huge bearing on discussions about individual freedom.

to the point if something is to the point, it is connected with what you are discussing:

- His writing is always concise and to the point.

- Fat is one of the essential parts of our diet. More to the point, the fat in a meal slows the digestive process and gradually releases energy into your blood stream.

3. NOT RELATED

not related/not connected adjective [not before noun]:

- Carr-Hill and Stern (1979) have provided clear evidence that unemployment and crime are not related
- The effectiveness of the drug was not related to the patient's age.
- These events were not connected with each other.

unrelated/unconnected adjective:

- Research has shown that performance on these tests is unrelated to intelligence.
- The two outbreaks of the disease were apparently unconnected with each other.
- She had to have surgery for an unrelated physical problem. (=a physical problem that was not connected to another problem that had been mentioned)

there is no relation/no connection:

- Studies have shown that there is no relation between how much coffee you drink and how much food you eat.
- There is clearly no connection between the person's gender and their ability to do the job.

bear no relation a formal way of saying that there is no relation between something and another thing:

- This belief bears no relation to reality.

separate adjective if two things are separate, they are not the same and are not connected with each other:

- The cost of the treatment is an entirely separate issue.
- Finance was kept separate from other functions of government.

discrete adjective a formal word meaning separate:

- The work is broken down into discrete tasks.
- For Descartes, all matter is continuous, and there are no discrete particles of matter.
- Psychiatry is discrete from psychology and psychotherapy.

distinct adjective two or more things that are distinct belong to the same general type, but are clearly different from each other in an important way:

- A map contains two distinct types of information.
- These functions fall into three entirely distinct categories.
- He is suffering from a mental disorder, as distinct from a mental illness. (=used when you want to emphasize that you are referring to a particular thing and not another very similar thing)

4. NOT RELATED TO WHAT YOU ARE DISCUSSING

irrelevant adjective not related to what you are discussing or what concerns you:

- The question of ownership is largely irrelevant.

- He spends too much time focussing on irrelevant details.
- Most members of the public see these things as simply irrelevant to their daily lives.

have nothing to do with used when you want to say strongly that something is not connected with another thing in any way:

- Intelligence has nothing to do with common sense.
- The reasons why they want to change the law have nothing to do with fighting terrorism.

have no bearing on if something has no bearing on a situation, it does not affect it and there is no need to consider it:

- The new data had no bearing on the outcome of the research.
- A recruit's family background should have no bearing on his suitability for officer training.

be beyond/outside the scope of to not be included in the range of things that you are discussing or writing about:

- These debates are outside the scope of this essay.
- A detailed examination of his theory is beyond the scope of this chapter.

XXVI SHOWING AND PROVING

1. *SHOW STH IS TRUE*

show verb [transitive] to provide the facts and information which make it clear that something is true:

- A recent survey by Sheffield University showed that 95% of patients were satisfied with the service that they received.
- They wanted to show to people how well the system worked.

prove verb [transitive] to show that something is definitely true by providing facts and information, especially when other people have doubted this:

- These documents prove that the three men were innocent.
- Lind proved that eating fresh oranges and limes could prevent sailors from getting the disease.
- He was able to prove his theory to his fellow scientists.

demonstrate verb [transitive] to do something or provide information that makes it very clear to people that something is true:

- The aim of the experiments was to demonstrate the effectiveness of the treatment.
- It has been demonstrated that even low levels of lead can damage the central nervous system.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Prove and demonstrate sound much more definite than show.

something can be seen used when something shows that what you are saying is true:

- This can be seen in the following examples.

- As can be seen in Table 1, wages have risen at a lower rate than the rate of inflation.
- Shaker furniture is extremely well made. Evidence of this can be seen in the surprising number of items that have survived to the present day.

be evidence of used when information shows that something is true or that something exists:

- Some people think that this research is evidence of a much larger problem.
- In the past, comet and meteorite strikes were much more common in the solar system. The pitted surface of the moon is evidence of that.

be symptomatic of to show that a problem or a bad situation exists:

- The protests were symptomatic of a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction with the government's policies.

reveal verb [transitive] to show that something is true, especially something surprising that many people did not realize:

- A recent survey revealed that 61% of those interviewed believe that tobacco advertising should be banned.
- The inquiry revealed how hundreds of children in public care were mistreated in the 1980s.

confirm verb [transitive] if something confirms an idea or opinion that people already have, it shows that it is true:

- The latest research confirms the view that global warming is happening at an increasing rate.
- Several surveys have confirmed that the blood pressure in diabetics is higher than in non-diabetics (Ostrander et al, 1965; Kannel & McGee, 1979).

support/back up verb [transitive] phrasal verb to show that an idea, opinion, or claim is true:

- Our research supports this view.
- They produced no evidence to back up their claims.
- Recent archeological discoveries seem to support the idea that there was a settlement here in Roman times.

corroborate verb [transitive] a formal word meaning to provide additional information that shows that what someone else has said is true. You use corroborate especially about findings or results:

- Further research is needed to corroborate the results of this study before the treatment is made available to the general public.
- Her evidence was corroborated by two other witnesses.

validate verb [transitive] a formal word meaning to prove that something is correct using scientific tests or very careful checking. You use validate especially about claims, theories, or data:

- Our data is collected and validated by a team of 120 researchers, using multiple sources to ensure reliability.
- We know that some scientists have altered the findings of their research in order to validate their claims.

- Before a theory can be validated, it needs to pass a further test, which we might call the review test.

substantiate verb [transitive] a formal word meaning to provide additional information that helps prove that a statement is correct. You use substantiate especially about allegations and claims:

- The investigation substantiated allegations made by former employees of the company.
- The evidence normally used to substantiate this claim is drawn from the work of Brennan and McGeevor (1985).

2. SHOW STH IS LIKELY

suggest verb [transitive] to show that something is probably true, even though there is no definite proof:

- This suggests that humans existed on earth thousands of years earlier than was previously thought.
- Recent research strongly suggests that high protein diets are actually bad for you.

indicate verb [transitive] if scientific facts, tests, figures etc indicate something, they show that it is probably true:

- Figures for 2002 indicate that more and more people are choosing not to get married.
- Investigations by government scientists have indicated that pesticides could be the cause of the condition, which results in children being born blind.

imply verb [transitive] if a piece of information implies that something is true, it shows that it is likely to be true, often in an indirect way:

- The maths and science reports imply that together these two subjects should occupy about one-third of the timetable.
- This implies that a vast number of universes exist with our own, each having equal reality.

there is some evidence that used when some evidence shows that something is true:

- There is some evidence that foods rich in vitamin A and vitamin C may give protection against cancer.

give the impression to make you think that a situation exists, even though this may not actually be true:

- Textbooks often give the impression that history is about the activities of kings and queens.
- The report gives the impression of having been rather hastily put together.

lead to the conclusion that to make you decide that something is likely to be true after examining all the facts, arguments etc:

- All these arguments lead to the conclusion that there should be greater control on gun ownership.

3. *STH IS UNTRUE*

disprove verb [transitive] to show that something is untrue:

- The results of the experiment seemed to disprove her theory.
- Some people think that drinking coffee helps burn off fat. Scientific studies have clearly disproved this idea.

contradict verb [transitive] if one statement, study, piece of evidence etc contradicts another, it makes the other one seem completely untrue or impossible:

- A study conducted at Massachusetts General Hospital contradicts the results of the Canadian study.
- Recent evidence appears to contradict his hypothesis.

refute verb [transitive] a formal word meaning to prove what someone has said is untrue:

- All attempts to refute Einstein's theory have failed.
- Her research refutes the idea that population growth is desirable and will not cause ecological damage.

invalidate verb [transitive] a formal word meaning to prove that someone's ideas or arguments contain mistakes, with the result that it is unlikely that they are true:

- Most people now believe that Marx's ideas have been invalidated by history.
- Problems with the way the original data was collected invalidated their findings.
- An international inspection would easily confirm or invalidate such reports.

demolish verb [transitive] to prove that something is completely wrong. You use demolish especially about arguments:

- Chomsky was able to demolish many of Skinner's arguments about how people acquire language.
- He demolished the widely held belief that the sun went around the Earth.

XVII STUDY AND RESEARCH

1. *TO STUDY STH TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT IT*

study verb [intransitive and transitive] to examine a subject carefully in order to find out more about it and discover new facts:

- Scientists are studying what causes the disease.
- Pavlov studied how dogs could be trained to associate certain sounds with food.
- She has been studying the relationship between writers' lives and their work.

do/carry out/conduct research to study something, especially as a part of a scientific or academic project:

- Universities are finding it difficult to get the funding they need to do basic research.
- The research was carried out by a team of scientists at Newcastle University.
- The department is conducting research into how to make diesel engines burn fuel more efficiently.
- Since 1992, the team has been carrying out research into the effects of human activity on wildlife.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Conduct research is more formal than do research or carry out research.

research verb [intransitive and transitive] to study a particular subject, especially a particular detailed part of a subject:

- She spent her life researching the causes of major childhood illnesses and birth defects.
- The book is well researched. (=the writer has studied this subject very carefully and thoroughly)

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Do/carry out/conduct research (into) is more common than research (verb).

investigate verb [intransitive and transitive] to try to find out all the facts about something in order to find out the truth about it. Investigate is often used about accidents and crimes. It is also used about scientific studies into a specialized subject:

- The authorities in California are still investigating what caused the crash.
- Psychiatrists first began to investigate the effects of the drug in the late 1960s.
- Greenpeace has been investigating the environmental impact of dumping nuclear waste in the ocean.

examine verb [transitive] to consider or look at something carefully in order to find out more about it:

- The professor and his team have been examining different methods of predicting earthquakes.
- The aim of the research is to examine how people's experiences in the classroom affect their choice of career in later life.

evaluate verb [transitive] to examine something in order to decide how good, useful, important etc it is:

- The best way to evaluate any treatment is to carry out trials on large groups of patients.
- The Commission will evaluate the relative costs and benefits of the three possible airport sites.

analyse verb [transitive] British English, analyze American English to study something in detail, especially figures and results from research:

- US scientists have been analyzing the latest data (=information obtained from research) about global warming.
- In a recent study, researchers analysed the results of seven criminal trials.

2. THE WORK OF STUDYING STH

study noun [countable] a piece of work in which someone examines a particular subject in order to find out more about it, and writes about what they have found:

- The study showed that 25 percent of adults do not eat breakfast at all, compared with 14 percent in 1961.
- Recent studies suggest that our sense of smell is closely linked with the part of the brain that deals with memory.

- Of the 176 patients who took part in the study, 97 said they noticed a significant improvement in their condition.
- In one study of almost 80,000 women, researchers found that those who used artificial sweeteners gained more weight over a year than those who ate sugar.

research noun [uncountable] careful detailed work that is done in order to find out more about a subject, especially as a part of a scientific or academic project:

- Billions of dollars have been spent on research into the causes and treatment of cancer.
- The University has for a long time been a leading centre for research in this field.
- Some people think that cigar smoking is safer than cigarette smoking. Recent research suggests that this is untrue.
- In his research, he showed that the islanders once had a highly developed culture.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Study is a countable noun, and can be used in the plural, for example: There have been many studies on this subject. Research is only used as an uncountable noun, for example: A lot of research has been done on this subject.

work noun [uncountable] the studies that have been done on a particular subject:

- Faraday is famous for his work on electricity.
- A lot of work has been done on hydrogen-powered cars.
- Their work had an enormous influence on the study of genetics.

experiment noun [countable] a scientific test in order to find out what happens when you do something:

- They carried out a series of experiments (=they did a series of experiments) in order to try to prove their theory.
- Experiments have shown that there is an increased risk of some forms of cancer.
- In his experiment, Pavlov only fed the dogs while ringing a bell.
- Many people think that there should be a ban on experiments on live animals.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Conduct an experiment is more formal than do an experiment or carry out an experiment.

test noun [countable] a process that is intended to find out something, for example how good or safe something is, or whether someone has an illness:

- A simple blood test will show whether you have the virus or not.
- The doctors did some tests to find out if the couple were able to have children.
- All new furniture must undergo tests (=have tests) to make sure that it does not catch fire easily.
- Tests have shown that pigs and sheep are actually highly intelligent animals.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Conduct a test is more formal than do a test or carry out a test.

trial noun [countable] a test to find out whether a new drug, product, system etc is safe, effective etc:

- The drug is currently undergoing clinical trials in the US. (=it is being tested by medical researchers there)
- Farmers were asked to carry out trials (=do trials) of genetically modified crops.

3. PIECE OF WRITING BY SOMEONE WHO IS STUDYING STH

essay noun [countable] a piece of writing about a subject. Essay is usually used about a piece of writing by a student at school or university. It is also used about a short piece of writing about a subject by a writer, especially one who is well-known:

- Every student on this course will have to write at least one essay on Shakespeare.
- In this essay, I will attempt to explain some of the reasons why young men become involved in violent crime.
- As was mentioned earlier in this essay, much work still remains to be done on this subject.
- In his essay, he compares the theories of several well-known Greek philosophers.
- The American writer, Susan Sontag, published a famous collection of essays on photography.

paper noun [countable] a piece of writing about a subject, written by a student as part of their studies, or by someone who has studied a subject as part of their research. Sometimes papers are given as talks at large academic meetings, or published in collections of academic writing about a subject:

- Paul has to write a paper on American fiction from 1900 to 1930 for a seminar next week.
- The professor has published over forty scientific papers on diseases of tropical crops
- She gave a paper on (=gave a talk on) "Women and Science" at a conference in Minneapolis.

dissertation noun [countable] a piece of writing about a subject, which is written as part of a university degree:

- In the third year of their course, students have to write a 10,000 word dissertation on a topic that has been approved by their tutor.
- This dissertation will focus on the development of the National Health Service.

thesis noun [countable] a long piece of writing about a subject, that is part of an advanced university degree such as a master's degree or a doctorate:

- He wrote his doctoral thesis on the literature of the English romantic movement.
- She travelled to Uganda to research her master's thesis on Ugandan music.
- Ellen, a graduate student in urban planning, is writing her thesis on parking lots.

4. THE RESULTS OF SOMEONE'S RESEARCH

results noun [plural] the figures and other information that are produced in a scientific study or experiment:

- The results of this experiment are shown in the diagram below.
- The results of the study showed that taking aspirin regularly reduced the risk of heart disease.
- It is expected that the results of the research will have important implications for teaching children who have learning difficulties.

findings noun [plural] the information that someone discovered as a result of examining a subject carefully, especially when the information appears in an official report:

- Her findings show that regular exercise can prevent some of the diseases that are common in old age.
- France's Ministry of Transport published the findings of a report into the development of road and rail links with Italy.
- Among its findings, the report mentioned that there were high levels of phosphates in rivers and lakes in southern England.

conclusion noun [countable] something that someone has decided after examining a subject carefully, especially when this is written at the end of an official report:

- The report's main conclusion was that more investment was needed in the police force.
- Other studies have reached similar conclusions.
- Critics complained that this conclusion was based on a survey of only a small number of women.
- Several eminent biologists challenged the conclusions of the report.

XVIII SUBJECTS AND TOPICS

1. SYNONYMS

subject noun [countable] the thing that someone writes or talks about:

- The main subject of the book is the history of the English language.
- The author deals with a range of different subjects in his article.
- A number of papers have been written on this subject. (=about this subject)
- The case was the subject of a Hollywood film.

topic noun [countable] a subject that people often discuss or write about, in books, newspapers, at school etc:

- The course covers topics such as interview techniques and giving presentations.
- Global warming continues to be a major topic of discussion.

theme noun [countable] an important idea that appears several times in a book, film, play etc, and influences its development:

- Man's relationship with nature is a common theme in his work.
- One of the main themes of the article is the importance of good dental care.
- Feminine beauty is a recurring theme (=a theme that appears often) in Western art.

issue noun [countable] an important subject or problem that people discuss and argue about:

- Dealing with climate change is one of the biggest issues facing the world today.
- The research raises a number of important issues. (=it brings these issues to people's attention)
- The problem of population growth is a major issue in developing countries.
- Abortion remains a highly controversial issue. (=people argue about it a lot and have strong feelings about it)

question noun [countable] a difficult subject or problem that has often been discussed but still needs to be solved:

- Scientists have been trying to find the answers to these questions for hundreds of years.
- We want to be protected from terrorist attacks. However, this also raises the question of (=it makes you want to discuss this question) how we can protect our basic freedoms as citizens.
- The research addresses some fundamental questions about the nature of knowledge. (=it tries to deal with some very basic and important questions)

matter noun [countable] a subject. You use matter or matters especially when talking in a general and rather vague way about a subject:

- I have little experience in these matters.
- Various matters were dealt with at the meeting.
- an expert on financial matters
- He held strong views on religious matters.
- People often do not want to discuss personal matters with their employer.
- Some people do not think that car crime is very important, but in fact it is a serious matter.
- In his book he gets right to the heart of the matter. (=the most important part of a subject)

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Matter is used about things in general, often without naming them. Issue and question are more specific. Don't write sentences such as 'Pollution is a big matter', when you mean: Pollution is a very important issue.

2. SAYING WHAT THE SUBJECT OF STH IS

about preposition:

- The book is about a boy named Huckleberry Finn.
- In her novels she writes about life in South Africa.
- Scientists are still trying to answer the great questions about the nature and origins of the universe.

on preposition about a particular subject:

- Professor Jones has written a number of books and articles on this subject.
- The Club has published its annual report on mountaineering and walking accidents in Scotland.

on the subject of/on the topic of about a particular subject:

- Hundreds of books have been written on the subject of population growth.
- She gave a series of lectures on the topic of nutrition.

concerning/regarding preposition formal words meaning "about a particular subject or point":

- The laws concerning child care and child protection will need to be reviewed.
- The report raises a number of important questions regarding food safety.

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

Don't say 'regarding to' or 'concerning to'. Just say regarding or concerning.

with regard to a formal phrase meaning "about something", used especially to introduce a subject, for example in a letter or report:

- Dear Sir, I am writing with regard to your advertisement in the Times.
- The college has adopted a tough approach with regard to racism and sexism.
- With regard to the recent series of terrorist attacks, it is likely that the police will be given new powers of arrest.

deal with phrasal verb to write about or be about a particular subject, especially a serious one, and examine it carefully and in detail:

- I will deal with the issue of pricing later.
- Chapter 5 deals with Italian art in the 15th century.

be concerned with adjective to be about a particular subject, especially a serious one, and examine it carefully and in detail:

- Most of the book is concerned with the relationship between politicians and the media.

focus on verb [intransitive] to deal mainly with a particular subject or problem and examine it in detail:

- In this essay I will focus on some of the results from recent research into brain function.
- The study focuses on the economic and social consequences of unemployment.
- She chose to focus on her home country, Brazil, for her dissertation.

tell the story of to describe what happened to someone or something:

- The play tells the story of a trip to Germany by an American woman and her husband.
- Snow White tells the story of a beautiful young princess and her jealous stepmother.